

GLEANINGS

FROM

VENETIAN HISTORY

BY

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WITH 225 ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOSEPH PENNELL

IN TWO VOLUMES

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CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

IN TEXT

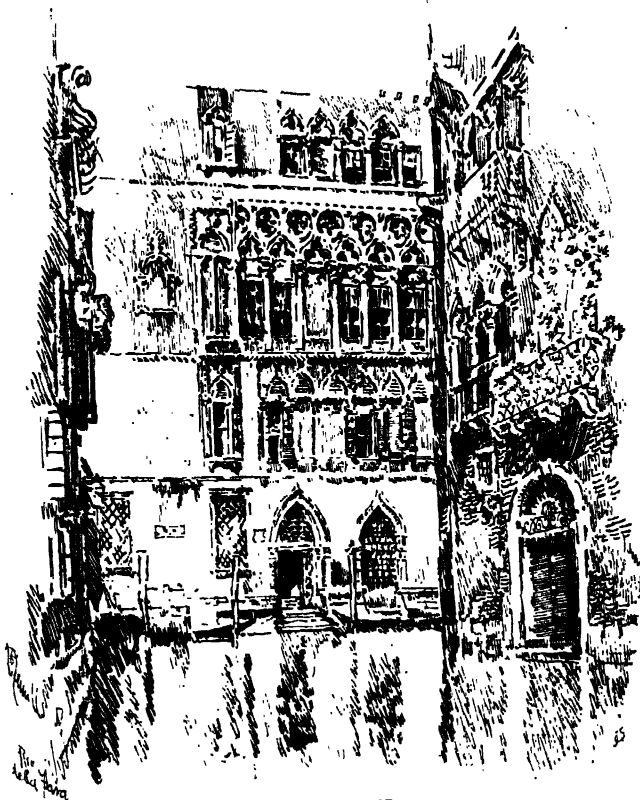


FROM OUTSIDE THE LIDO

SALVE VENETIA!

Venice is the most personal of all cities in the world, the most feminine, the most comparable to a woman, the least dependent, for her individuality, upon her inhabitants, ancient or modern. What would Rome be without the memory of the Cæsars? What would Paris be without the Parisians? What was Constantinople like before it was Turkish? The imagination can hardly picture a Venice different from her present self at any time in her history. Where all is colour, the more brilliant costumes of earlier times could add but little; a general exodus of all her inhabitants to-day would leave almost as much of it behind. In the still canals the gorgeous palaces continually gaze down upon their own reflected images with placid satisfaction, and look with calm indifference upon the changing genera-

tions of men and women that glide upon the waters. The mists gather upon the mysterious lagoons and sink



RIO DELLA PACE

away again before the devouring light, day after day, year after year, century after century; and Venice is always there herself, sleeping or waking, laughing,

weeping, dreaming, singing or sighing, living her own life through ages, with an intensely vital personality which time has hardly modified, and is altogether powerless to destroy. Somehow it would not surprise those who know her, to come suddenly upon her and find that all human life was extinct within her, while her



THE MISTS GATHER ON THE LAGOONS

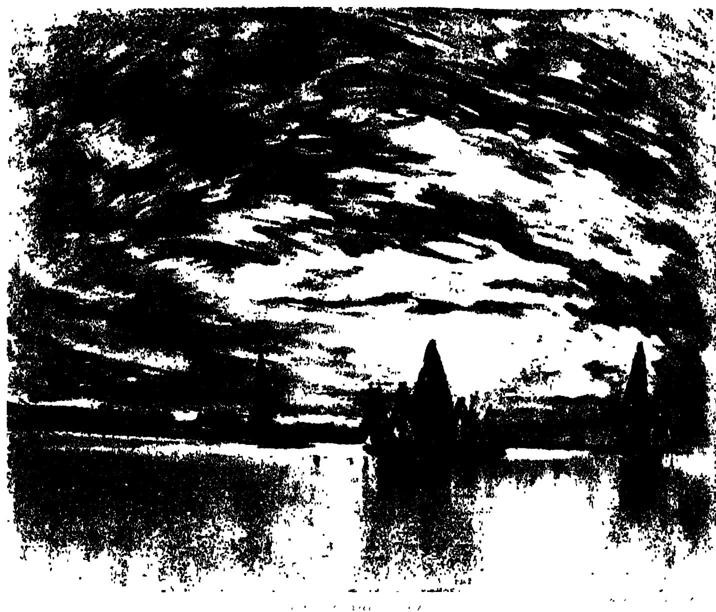
own went on, strong as ever; nor yet, in the other extreme, would it seem astonishing if all that has been should begin again, as though it had never ceased to be, if the Bucentaur swept down the Grand Canal to the beat of its two hundred oars, bearing the Doge out to wed the sea with gorgeous train; if the Great Council began to sit again in all its splendour; if the

Piazza were thronged once more with men and women from the pictures of Paris Bordone, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, and Titian; if Eastern shipping crowded the entrance to the Giudecca, and Eastern merchants filled the shady ways of the Merceria. What miracle could seem miraculous in Venice, the city of wonders?

It is hard indeed to recall the beginnings of the city, and the time when a few sand-ridges just rose above the surface of the motionless lagoon, like the backs of dozing whales in a summer sea. The fishermen from the mainland saw the resemblance too, and called them 'backs'—'dorsi'—giving some of them names which like 'Dorso duro' have clung to them until our own time, and will perhaps live on, years hence, among other generations of fishermen, when Venice shall have disappeared into the waste of sand and water, out of which her astonishing personality grew into being, and in which it has flourished and survived nearly fifteen centuries.

Mut. Less.

We are not concerned scientifically with the origin of the Venetian people or of their name; we need not go back with Romanin to the legendary days of the first great struggle between Asia and Europe, in the hope of proving that the Venetians were of the great Scythian race and took the side of Troy against the injured Atrides; it matters not at all whether the Venetians were the same as the Eneti, whether Eneti was a Greek name signifying those that 'went in,' the 'Intruders,' or whether it came from the Syriac Hanida, meaning a 'Pilgrim.' Venice did not begin under the



walls of Troy, nor even in the great Roman consular province of the mainland that bore the name and handed it down. Venice began to exist when Europe rang with the cry of fear—'The Huns are upon us!'—on the day when the first fugitives, blind with terror, stumbled ashore upon the back of one of the sand whales in the lagoon, and dared not go back.

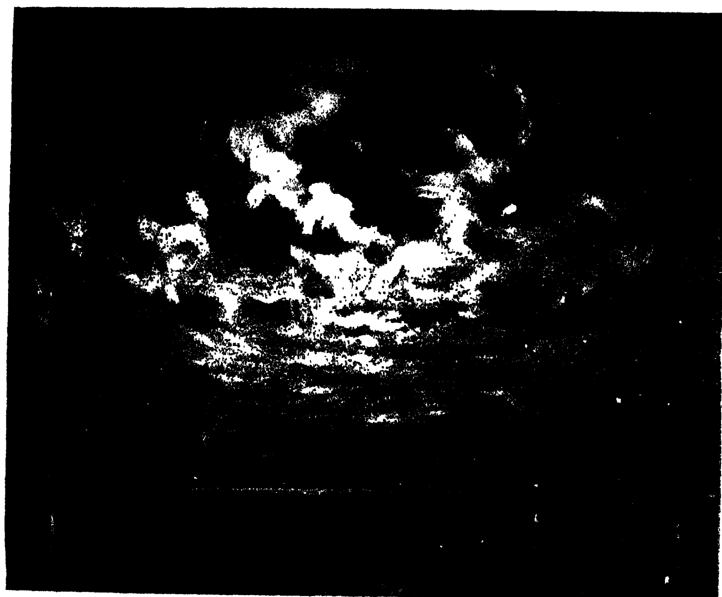
Venice was Venice from the first, and is Venice still, a person in our imagination, almost more than a place. To most people her name does not instantly suggest names of great Venetians, as 'Florence' suggests the Medici, as 'Rome' suggests the Cæsars and the Popes, as 'Paris' suggests Louis XIV. and Bonaparte, as 'Constantinople' suggests the Sultan, and 'Bagdad' the Caliphs. 'Venice' calls up a dream of colour, of rich palaces and of still water, and at the name there are more men who will think of Shylock and Othello than of Enrico Dandolo, or Titian, or Carlo Zeno, or Vittor Pisani. Without much reading and some study it is almost impossible to realise that Venice was once a great European power and a weighty element in the alternating equilibrium and unrest of nations; Venice seems to-day a capital without a country, an empress without an empire, and one thinks of her as having always existed simply in order to be always herself, a Venice for Venice's sake, as it were, and not for the purpose of exercising any power, nor as the product of extraneous forces concentrated at a point and working towards a result.

These considerations may explain the charm felt by

all those who know her, and the attraction, also, which is in most books that treat her as an artistic and romantic whole, complete in herself, to be studied, admired, and perhaps worshipped, with only an occasional allusion to her political history. So, too, one may account for the dry dulness and uncharming prosiness of most books that profess to tell the history of Venice impartially and justly. There is no such thing as impartial history, and impartial justice is an empty phrase, as every lawyer knows. It is only the second-rate historian, or the compiler of school primers, who does not take one side or the other in the struggles he describes; and a judge who feels no instinctive sympathy for right against wrong, while as yet but half proved, can never be anything but a judicial hack and a legal machine.

Who seeks true poetry, said Rossi, writing on Venice, will find it most abundantly in the early memories of a Christian nation; and indeed the old chronicles are full of it, of idyls, of legends, and of heroic tales. Only dream a while over the yellow pages of Muratori, and presently you will scent the spring flowers of a thousand years ago, and hear the ripple of the blue waves that lent young Venice their purity, their brilliancy, and their fresh young music. You may even enjoy a pagan vision of maiden Aphrodite rising suddenly out of the sea into the sunshine, but the dream dissolves only too soon, grace turns into strength, the lovely smile of the girl-goddess fades from the commanding features of the

Preface Chron. Alt.



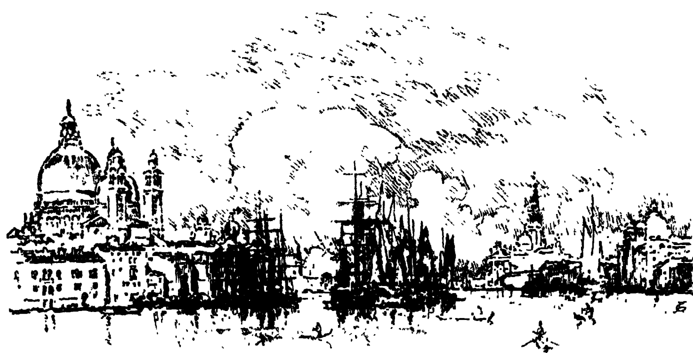
reigning queen, and heavenly Venus is already earthly Cleopatra.

It is better to open our arms gladly to the beautiful when she comes to us, than to prepare our dissecting instruments as soon as we are aware of her presence. Phidias and Praxiteles were ignorant of medical anatomy; Thucydides knew nothing of 'scientific' methods in history; the Rhapsodists were not grammarians. No man need be a grammarian to love Homer, nor a scientific historian if he would be thrilled with interest over the siege of Syracuse, nor an anatomist when he elects to dream before the Hermes of Olympia.

And so with Venice; she is a form of beauty, and must be looked upon as that and nothing else; not critically, for criticism means comparison, and Venice is too personal and individual, and too unlike other cities to be fairly compared with them; not coldly, for she appeals to the senses and to the human heart, and craves a little warmth of sympathy; above all, not in a spirit of righteous severity, for he who would follow her story must learn to forgive her almost at every step.

She has paid for her mistakes with all save her inextinguishable life; she has expiated her sins of ill-faith, of injustice and ingratitude, by the loss of everything but her imperishable charm; the power and the will to do evil are gone from her with her empire, and her name stands on the subject-roll of another's kingdom; she is a widowed and dethroned queen, she is a lonely and lovely princess; she is the Andromeda of

Europe, chained fast to her island and trembling in fear of the monster Modern Progress, whose terrible roar is heard already from the near mainland of Italy, across the protecting water. Will any Perseus come down in time to save her?



LOOKING TOWARDS ST. GEORGE'S



THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, VENICE

I

THE BEGINNINGS

In the beginning the river washed sand and mud out through the shallow water at the two mouths of the Brenta; and the tide fought against the streams at flood, so that the silt rose up in bars, but at ebb the salt water rushed out again, mingled with the fresh, and strong turbid currents hollowed channels between the banks, leading out to seaward, until the islands and bars took permanent shape and the currents acquired

regular directions, in and out, between and amongst them. In the beginning the spirit of unborn Venice seemed to say, more truly than Archimedes, 'Give me a place whereon to stand, and I will move the world';



THE LIGHTS OF THE LIDO

and the rivers and the tides heaped up the sand and made a dry place for her in the midst of the sea.

The lagoon is a shallow basin, roughly shaped like a crescent, its convexity making a bay in the mainland, its concave side bounded against the open sea by the curving banks, called 'Lidi,' beaches, which are long and narrow islands, to distinguish them from the islets of less regular shape that rise above the surface here

and there within the confines of the lagoon, those on which Venice stands, and Torcello and Murano, and others which make a miniature archipelago, ending with Chioggia, at the southern point of the crescent.

This archipelago contains twelve principal islands,



some of which were inhabited by families that got a living by trading, by hunting and by fishing, selling both fish and game to the ships that plied between Ravenna and Aquileia.

Very early the people of the latter city had made a harbour for their vessels on the island of Grado, which was nearest to them, and the Paduans made small

commercial stations on the islands of Rialto and Olivolo. Now and then some rich man from the mainland built himself a small villa on one of the wooded islets, and came thither for his pleasure and for sport. For some of these islands were covered with pine-trees and cane-brakes, while some were muddy, naturally sterile, and inhospitable; but the early settlers had soon solidified and modified the soil, and reduced it to the cultivation of fodder for cattle, and of vines.

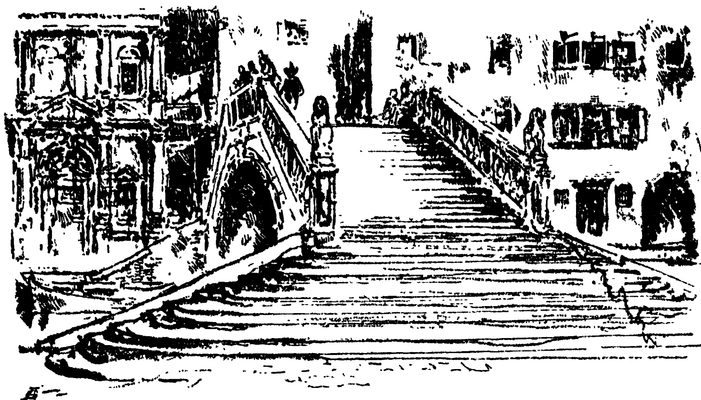
The archipelago was therefore not so much a barren solitude as a quiet corner in very troubled times, and while the small farmers and fishermen knew nothing of Italy's miserable condition, the rich sportsmen who spent a little time there were glad to forget the terrible state of things in their own great world.

For since the capital of the Empire had been transferred to Constantinople, Italy had fallen a prey to the greed of barbarians, and the province of Venetia had been left under the very intermittent protection of a few paid troops supposed to be commanded by a Count or 'Corrector' appointed by the Emperor.

Rom. i. 26.

On the rich mainland stood the cities of Venetia, Aquileia, Altinum, Padua, and many more; and the wealthy citizens built villas by the sea, with groves of noble trees, trim gardens and wide fishponds, and marble steps leading down to the water's edge; and they hunted the wild boar and the stag in the near forests, all the way to the foot of the Julian hills. The land was rich, and far removed from turbulent Rome

and intriguing Constantinople, and many a Roman noble took sanctuary from politics on the enchanting shore, to dream away his last years in a luxurious philosophy that was based on wealth but was fed on every requirement of culture, and was made sweet by the past experience of danger and unrest.



BRIDGE AT CHIOGGIA

Then came the first Goths, with fire and sword—'more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea'—and then a score of years later fair-haired Alaric, the Achilles of the North, and, like Pelides, untiring, wrathful, inexorable, bold, yet just, according to his lights, and high-souled if not high-minded, destined first to terrible defeat at Pollentia, but next to still more awful victory, and soon to death and a mysterious grave.

About 406 A.D.

Before the Goths men scattered and fled, the rich to what seemed safety, in Rome, the poor to the woods, to the hills, to the wretched islets of the lagoon. Back

they came to their villas, their sea-baths, and their groves when it was surely known that great Alaric was dead and laid to his royal rest in the bed of the southern river.

They came back, the poor and the rich, while the world-worn, luxurious, highly-cultivated men of the last days of the Empire enjoyed their hunting and fishing in peace; and over their elaborate dishes and their cups of spiced Greek wine they quoted to each other Martial's lines:—

'Ye shores of Altinum, ye that vie with Baiae's villas—thou grove, that sawest Phæthon's fiery end—and Maiden Sola, fairest of wood-nymphs thou, espoused beside the Euganean lakes with Faunus of Antenor's Paduan land—and thou, Aquileia, that rejoicest in Tamavus, thine own river, sought by Leda's sons where Castor's steed drank of the seven waters—Ye shall be unto mine old age a haven and resting-place, if but mine ease may have the right to choose.'

But while they repeated the fluent elegiacs they remembered the Goths uneasily, for the Empire was in its last years and weak, and Venetia was protected against the barbarians north and east by a handful of Sarmatian mercenaries. What had happened once might happen again, and as the years slipped by each one seemed to bring it nearer; and in half a century after Alaric's first descent, there came another conqueror more terrible than the first, whom men called Attila, the Scourge of God; but he told the Christians that he was the dreadful Antichrist, and the people cried out, 'The Huns are upon us,' and they fled for their lives

into the cities. Aquileia, at that time the second city of Italy, and Padua, Altinum, and others, defended themselves and fell, and the people who could not escape perished miserably.

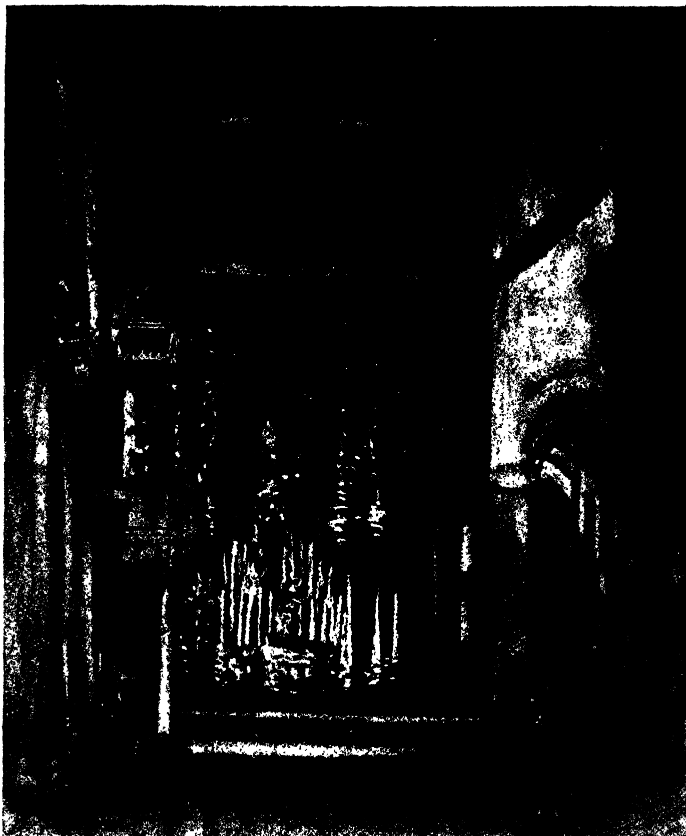
This is history, single and clear. But here springs up legend and says that Attila, who never crossed the Po, laid waste all Tuscany, and his name is a byword of terror, for blood and massacre, and destruction and all bestial ferocity. Legend says, too, that while he was besieging Aquileia, the Hun king saw the need of a fort on high ground, where there was none; and that in three days his hordes piled up the hill on which Udine stands, bringing earth in their helmets and shields, and stones on their backs. Then the Aquileians attempted to flood the country and drown out their besiegers, and they broke through the dykes that kept out the waters of the Piave; but the Huns cut down the grove of Phaëthon and made a vast dam of the trees.

D'Ancona.

It is also told by Paul the Deacon how on a certain day Attila came too near the walls, spying for a weak point, and a party of the besieged folk fell upon him unawares; but he escaped, with his bow in his hand and his crooked sword, the sword of a Scythian war-god, between his teeth, 'dire flame flashing from his eyes,' and all that his enemies had of him was his crest.

So Aquileia resisted him long, and the Huns were discouraged, until Attila saw a flight of storks flying from the walls and knew thereby that there was famine within.

Then, says the legend, the king of the Aquileians, Menappus, who seems to be quite mythical, took



THE CATHEDRAL AT MURANO

counsel with his brother Antiochus, how the people might escape over the lagoon before the city fell. So they set up wooden images as soldiers with helmet and

shield on the ramparts, to represent sentinels, and the Huns were deceived. But one of Attila's chief warriors flew his hawk at the walls, and it settled upon the head of one of the wooden soldiers. So, when the Huns saw that the sentinel was an image and not a man, they scaled the battlements and sacked the almost deserted city and burned it.

It is told also, and the fishermen of those waters still believe the tale, that before they escaped the Aquileians dug a deep well and hid their treasures in it; and deeds of sale of land are extant, dated as late as the year 1800, in which the seller of the property reserved his right to the legendary treasure well, if it should ever be found. The truth is, however, that after the destruction of the great city and the disappearance of the Huns, many of the fugitives went back and recovered what they had hidden.

The tide of legend sweeps down the coast with the wild riders to Altinum, where mythical King Janus fights, like a Roland, on a steed that has human understanding and that bears him out of Attila's reach, half dead of his wounds. And inland, then, towards Padua, and up to its very walls, the heroes fight; this time Attila is wounded, and is saved only by his horse's marvellous speed, but on the next day the two kings meet again in the presence of their armies to decide the war in single combat.

Janus unhorses Attila, and strikes off his ear, and would cut off his head too, but five hundred Hunnish knights rush to the rescue of their king, and Janus is

prisoner. But Attila's anger is roused against them. They have broken the laws of knightly combat. His honour is tarnished because his life is saved. To clear it, he sets King Janus free and hangs his five hundred knights as a vast sacrifice for atonement. Then Padua is overpowered and sacked and burned.

The myth goes on to the end in a blaze of impossibilities. Before Rimini Attila disguises himself as a French pilgrim, hides a poisoned knife under his robe, and steals into the besieged city to murder Janus. He finds him playing at dice with one of his knights, and armed from head to foot. He interrupts the game, asks questions, forgets himself, shows his wolfish teeth, and Janus recognises him by the absence of the one ear lopped off at Padua. In an instant the king and the knight overpower the great Hun and slay him on the spot; and so ends Attila, and the myth.

. . . . . .

Of all this legend little enough remains, and that is best summed up in the now almost forgotten line quoted by Professor d'Ancona in his *Leggende* :—

> . . . nata ella sola
> Di serve madri libera figluola.

'The only daughter—among many—of enslaved mothers that was ever born free.' Truly well said of Venice.

The chronicles tell the true story of the first beginnings, and how the people of the pillaged cities found a precarious refuge in the little archipelago. They crossed in their light boats and landed safely, and

forthwith made huts and tabernacles of branches to shelter the relics of the saints which they had saved as possessions more precious than their household goods or little hoards of gold and silver. But the people themselves beached their boats high and dry and lived in them, sheltered from the weather only by awnings, just as the last of the sailor traders still live wherever they find a market on the Calabrian shore; for they hoped to go back to their homes. And so indeed they did, when the Huns departed at last; they returned to their cities and rebuilt the battered walls of Aquileia and Altinum, trusting to dwell in peace. But the second destruction was not far off: the Ostrogoths came, and the Lombards, and the people fled once more, never to return.

Rom. i. 56-57.

544-564 A.D.

568 A.D.

The unknown author of the Chronicle of Altinum carries on the tale in a most amazing compound of history, fiction, poetry, and statistics. More than one scholar has indeed been tempted to surmise that this document is the work of several writers.

From them, or from the one, we learn something of the circumstances which drove the inhabitants of Altinum to take to their boats and seek a final refuge in the lagoons; and the story of the second flight, like that of the first, is fantastically illuminated by the writer's poetic imagination.

'In the days of the Bishop Paul' is the only date the Chronicle gives, and doubtless that was very clear to the first monk who took down the manuscript

from its place in the convent library and first pored over its contents. In the days, therefore, when Paul was bishop in Altinum, there came out of the west a pestilence of cruel pagans, fierce Lombards, who destroyed cities in their path as the flame licks up dry grass, and who would surely have made an end of the peaceful people of Altinum if Heaven had not sent signs warning them to escape.

Chron. Altin.

For one day Bishop Paul looked up to the towers and turrets of the city and saw that the birds which had their nests therein were flying round and round in agitation, and were chirping and chattering and cawing, each after his kind, as if they were gathered together in consultation. But suddenly, as Paul looked, the birds all took their flight southwards; and those that had young which could not yet fly, carried them in their beaks.

The good Bishop knew at once that this portent was a warning, and he called his flock together and told what he had seen. Then many of the people, never doubting but that he was right, fled at once towards Ravenna, and to Istria, and to the cities of the Pentapolis; but the rest fasted three days and prayed that God, by another sign, would show them the path of safety.

On the third day, therefore, a strong and clear voice was heard, saying, 'Go up into the great tower and look towards the stars.' And they went up; and the stars' reflections made paths upon the water towards the islands of the lagoons. Then the people who had remained filled their boats with their possessions; and the good Bishop Paul led them, and the two holy

priests Geminianus and Maurus, and two noble knights, Arius and Arator; and they came safely to the island of Grado, and landed there, and were saved. But soon afterwards they spread over some of the other islands and gave names to these, which recalled memories of their old home.

Now, as has been pointed out already in speaking of the first flight, the little archipelago was by no means uninhabited. Fishermen lived on the islands, and small farmers and some herdsmen, none of whom, it may be supposed, were inclined to give the newcomers a warm welcome. In plain fact the people of the mainland, well provided and well armed, made an easy conquest of the islands; but in the fiction of the Chronicle it seemed necessary to account for the high-handed deed on grounds of virtue and religion, and the author forthwith launches into legend, showing us how Arius and Arator set at rest the scruples of the conquerors, if peradventure they had any.

God and the saints intervened. One day the holy Maurus looked towards one of the islands, and behold, two bright stars stood together above it, and a great voice was heard saying, 'I am the Lord, the Master and the Saviour of the world. Raise thou here a temple to my glory.' But from the other star came a soft, clear voice which said, 'I am Mary, the mother of God. Build unto me a church.'

There was no possibility of questioning such a form of investiture, or of disputing the right of invaders who received their orders audibly from Heaven.

A little farther on there was a very beautiful island, covered with grass, whereon pastured great flocks of cattle and sheep ; and Maurus asked whether perchance these herds belonged to any man, and received answer immediately. For suddenly there appeared in a rosy brightness like the dawn two figures of divine beauty ; and one was that of an old man, but the other was young, and little more than a lad. Then spake the old man and said, 'I am Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, who am set over all flocks, and have power to forgive all sins. I give unto thee this island, and thou shalt build a temple in honour of my name.' Also the youth spake, saying, 'I am the servant of God. I am called Autolinus, and I gave my life for Christ's sake. Build me a little church. My name is nowhere spoken in the liturgy with those of the martyrs ; I enjoin upon thee to name me in thy prayers, both night and day, and I will pray God to grant all that thou shalt ask for thee and thine.' Moreover, the two saints, before they vanished, traced on the ground the plans of the churches they desired for themselves.

Again, a little white cloud appeared to the holy Maurus, and it was the footstool under the feet of a most fair maiden, who spake and said, 'I am Justina, whom they put to death in Padua because I confessed the name of Christ. I beseech thee, thou priest of the Lord, that thou wilt raise upon this island a little church, to honour me, wherein thou shalt sing praises to me every day and every night, as a Martyr and a Virgin, and I will grant whatsoever thou askest of me.'

Afterwards many other heavenly visions came to comfort the people of Altinum, and, amongst other saints, Saint John the Baptist also received the promise of a fair temple.

By heavenly or earthly means, therefore, the fugitives had now obtained for themselves a home, and they began to consider how they should establish themselves in it conveniently, so that it should not be taken from them. Then, such of the people as had occupied a high position in Altino were charged by the leaders to take each the command of one island—here a Marcello, there a Faliero, and farther on a Calciamiro ; all names which appear again and again throughout the history of the maritime state which was then and there founded and began to live, while the Lombards were tearing down the walls of the old homes on the mainland and burning what could not be destroyed in any other way.



THE APPROACH FROM MESTRE

II

THE LITTLE GOLDEN AGE

As soon as the fugitives had given up all hope of returning to the mainland, they began that tremendous struggle with nature which built up the Venice we still see, and which, in some degree, will end only when it shall have finally disappeared again in the course of ages. The beginners displayed an almost incredible activity, which their descendants sustained without a break for centuries.

They strengthened the muddy islands with dykes and rows of driven piles; they dug canals and lined them first with timber and then with stone; they straightened the courses of the currents, lest these should wash away the least fragment of land, where there was so little; they worked like beavers to win a few poor yards of earth from the restless flood.

The different tribes led strangely independent existences, though living so near together in the islands they had seized. Each one endeavoured to model the new home as much as possible upon the old, celebrating the same feasts in honour of the same saints, upon altars that enshrined the same long-treasured relics, and clinging with the affection and tenacity of unwilling exiles to the traditions and customs of the fatherland.

Though living almost within a stone's throw the one from the other, the people of Aquileia, of Altinum, and of Padua held at first hardly any communication, and had little in common; but they all clung to the patriarchal life, as is easily proved by very ancient documents. It is quite certain that each group had a chief, chosen to govern the little colony on account of his superior experience, riches, and authority. He was the guardian of the old home traditions, and strove to preserve them ever young, and to him appeal was made in all questions of justice and equity.

Rom. i. 73.

It is most important to remember that all these early settlers were descended from people who had been subject for centuries to Roman influence, as well as to

Roman government; and it was only natural that they should long afterwards show traces of such early national training, if I may use the expression. Their society almost instinctively sifted itself into castes: there were nobles—that is, the rich; there were the burghers, and there were the 'little people,' as they were called—'minori.' It was the duty of the nobles to provide all the rest with the means of living, as well as to govern and protect them. Custom required that every rich man should entertain under his protection a certain number of families of lower rank, who were called the 'convicini,' that is, 'fellow-neighbours,' a usage which recalled the Roman system of patron and client. The father of the family, as in Rome, had almost unlimited power over his children. All meetings of importance were presided over by the clergy.

Rom. i. 95.

Rom. i. 60.

It was, in fact, an assembly of the clergy and of fathers of families which, in each group of emigrants, had given the leader of the expedition the Roman title of Tribune; and after a leader's death his successor was elected in the same way, very generally from amongst his direct descendants. If this occurred during three or four successive generations his family became naturally invested with a real hereditary authority. The relation between the head of the family and the 'fellow-neighbours' consisted of generosity on the one hand and of gratitude on the other, a species of exchange of sentiments not likely to produce undue tension. But

Rom. i. 76.

Chron. Altin.

where the head of the colony was concerned, an ambitious tribune, who showed signs of trying to turn himself into an autocrat, was held in check by the necessity of being re-elected to his office every year. For in each island, on the feast of its particular patron saint, the people met together, either in the church or on the shore, to choose the chief for the next twelve months, and they often elected the same tribune again and again ; but if he had done the slightest thing to displease them, they had it in their power to choose a better man in his place.

During his term of office the tribune took for himself tithes on game that was killed, fish that was caught, and crops that were harvested.

Properly speaking, there were neither magistrates nor tribunals at that time, for the tribune himself judged all causes in public, most often in the church. A few fragments of written law existed, no doubt, but they were wholly inadequate ; and though it was attempted to supply their deficiencies by adding some articles from the Lombard code, the real law was tradition. Such was the good faith of that little golden age, that the sworn evidence of two respectable persons was enough to convict any misdoer without any further form of trial, and condign punishment followed directly upon conviction.

According to the accounts they have left of themselves, these primitive Venetians were a simple and devout people, who divided their time between honest labour, the singing of psalms and devout hymns, and the narration to each other of beatific visions of Apostles

and Virgin Martyrs, who appeared for the purpose of ordering themselves churches. The churches were undoubtedly built in great numbers, largely out of the better fragments which could still be gathered amidst the ruins of the old forsaken cities on the mainland. The nobles of Padua, who were probably the best of the colonists, brought enough old material to build themselves the whole town of Heraclea, on the island of that name; but even there the best and most artistic pieces of stone and marble were used in the construction of the churches and monasteries.

The people worked in the fields, cultivated the vine, bred cattle, and dealt in salt, which latter was one of their chief resources. They were not yet rich, but they were already economical, and their gains more than sufficed for their needs, so that the slow accumulation of wealth began at a very early period.

The ancient Venetian type, described in Roman times, continued to dominate even beyond the fourteenth century. The men were large, fair-haired, and strong; the women were rather inclined to be stout, and it was noticed that their hair turned grey comparatively early.

Rom. i. 67.

Both sexes dressed with great simplicity, and for a long time clung to the old Roman fashions. They had always shown a remarkable liking for blue clothes; during many centuries the inhabitants of Venetia had been known as the 'Blues,' and long after the division of the Empire one faction in the games of the circus went by that name.

Vecellio.

Their speech was still Latin at that early time, but soon afterwards the influence of the Greeks and Lombards began to make itself felt in their language, as well as in their dress and ornaments, and even in their architecture.

Dalmedico.

They lived in a certain abundance, and ate much meat, after the manner of all young nations. One may dig almost anywhere and come upon layers of the bones of wild boar and other game, as well as of cattle and sheep. Among fish they are known to have thought the turbot the best, and they preferred wild ducks to all other birds. The vine throve also, and produced good wines which soon gained a reputation on the mainland.

Mut. Costumi.

At first the emigrants needed no occupations beyond husbandry, fishing, and the preparation of salt; but as the population increased and prices rose accordingly, since saving had begun, the need of a wider field of activity was felt, and the Venetians rapidly developed the seafaring instincts of all healthy and active island peoples. Two hundred years had not elapsed since the raid of the Huns before the small archipelago at the head of the Adriatic was in possession of the finest fleet of vessels that Italy could yet boast.

Such a golden age as the chroniclers describe could not last long. In every newly-peopled country the rule is good faith, mutual help and charity between man and man, so long as there is a common adversary to be overcome, whether in the shape of natural difficulties, as was the case in the Venetian islands, or of wild

beasts, or of human enemies, as in North America. So long as the settlers in the archipelago had to fight against the elements to win a stable foundation for their towns against the changeful, hungry currents; so long as they had to work hard to break and plough the land, to plant the vine, to build habitations for themselves and temples for their protecting saints, just so long did they abstain from coveting their neighbours' goods. There was even a sort of rough-and-ready federation between the islands for the joint protection of their commerce and their ships, and now and then, in exceptional circumstances, the tribunes of the
Rom. i. 68. different isles had met together in debate for the common welfare. Their improvised parliament even received a name; it was called the Maritime University.

But as the general wealth increased, and the energetic struggle with nature settled into a steady and not excessive effort, the people of each island very naturally began to think less about themselves and more about their neighbours. Leisure bred vanity, vanity bred envy, and envy brought forth violence of all sorts.

The evil began at the top of the communities and spread downwards. The families of the tribunes became jealous one of another, and tried to outdo each other in wealth and display and power; and the poorer sort of the people took sides with their leaders and vied with each other, island with island, so that before the end of the seventh century much blood had dyed the lagoons.

Naturally enough, such internal discord laid the communities open to attacks from without; and the Slav pirates came sailing in their swift vessels from the Dalmatian coast, and gathered rich booty in the archipelago. In the face of a common danger home quarrels were once more forgotten, and the people of the islands met to consider the general safety.

It was soon decided that internal peace could only be maintained by electing a single leader over all, a Dux, a Duke, a Doge, and the first choice fell on Paulus Lucas Anafestus, of Heraclea. *697-717 A.D.* Each island was to preserve its own tribune, its own laws, and its own judges, if it had any, and the Doge was to meddle with nothing that did not concern the common welfare of the whole federation. Moreover, no measure proposed by him was to become law until the people had voted upon it in general assembly called the Arengo.

Such was the remedy proposed, and in it lay the germ of the future form of government. But at first it produced a result the contrary of what was expected. The families of the different tribunes had envied and hated one another; they united to envy and hate the family of which the head was in power as Doge.

A violent dispute between the partisans of Anafestus and those of the tribune of Equilio brought about the first conflict. Equilio was in part overgrown with pine-trees, and the angry *Rom. i. 107.* adversaries met in the dusky grove and fought to the death; and it is recorded that the small canal, which

drained the land under the trees, ran red that day, wherefore it was afterwards called 'Archimicidium,' which I take to mean 'the beginning of killing'; but it is now the Canal Orfano, in which criminals were drowned during many centuries.

That day was indeed the beginning of murder between the people of Equilio and those of Heraclea, and their hatred for each other was handed down afterwards from generation to generation, to our own times, so that even when the two islands were both included in the city of Venice, and both governed by the same municipal laws, the people still formed two hostile factions, of which more will be said hereafter.

After having elected three doges, the people concluded from the result that they had been mistaken in choosing such a form of government, and by common agreement the power was placed in the hands of a military head, who was called the Chief of Militia; but as this experiment proved a failure after a trial of five years, the federation went back to the election of a Doge.

737-742 A.D.

During all this period, and up to the ninth century, the islands were nominally under the protection of the Eastern Empire, if not under its domination; but a little study of the subject shows that the actors more than once changed parts, and that the protected were as often as not besought to become the protectors. For instance, the Exarch Paul, the viceroy of the Emperor, could never have re-entered his city of Ravenna, after the Lombards had taken it, unless the

Venetians had helped him; and when the Doge Orso received of the Emperor the title of 'Hypatos,' it must have been given to him rather as the acknowledgment of a debt of gratitude to an ally than as a recompense granted to a faithful subject.

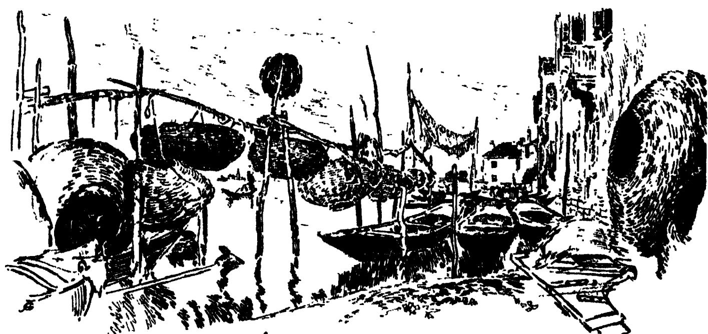
In such a difference there is something more than a shade that distinguishes two similar formalities; and historians have interpreted the Emperor's brief, and other acts of the Court of Constantinople, according to their varying pleasure. Yet the truth is clear enough. The new-born Republic possessed a real independence, based on the good relations she maintained with her neighbours in general. She was satisfied with her power of governing herself, and was not inclined to quarrel with the Court of Constantinople, or with her nearer neighbours on the peninsula, about such trifles as words and forms. Her early policy was rather to escape notice than to boast of her liberty; yet it cannot be denied that during the seventh and eighth centuries the Greek influence predominated, both in the spirit of the laws and in the commercial activity of the Republic.

Meanwhile the more discontented citizens, and notably the more powerful families, which were jealous of each other, did their best to stir up faction and to bring about a revolutionary change which would have been ruinous. In the hope of internal quiet, the capital was transferred from Heraclea to Malamocco, of which the inhabitants were considered the most peaceful and law-abiding in all the lagoons; but the

remedy was not a serious one, and the doges were successively murdered, or exiled, or forced to abdicate.

The Republic was on the point of perishing in these inglorious struggles when an unforeseen danger from abroad saved it from ruin by forcing all the Venetians to forget their differences and unite against a common enemy.

The year 810 marks the beginning of a new era.



FISH BASKETS





VENICE FROM THE LIDO

III

THE REPUBLIC OF SAINT MARK

DURING some time the influence of the Franks had been felt in the islands, and was beginning to counterbalance that of the Greeks. The great families now separated into two distinct parties, one of which favoured the rising Empire of the West, while the sympathies of the other remained firmly attached to the Court of Constantinople. These opposite leanings, however, were caused by questions of trade and money-making much more than by any political tendency, and neither side had any inclination to accept a master.

Yet one man seems to have seriously meditated betraying the Republic to Pepin, the son of Charle-

magne, who had received the Kingdom of Italy as his



SHOPS NEAR THE RIALTO

portion, and desired to extend his dominions by wresting Dalmatia and Istria from Nicephoros, the Emperor of the East. The traitor was the Doge Obelerio, who had spent a part of his youth

Rom. i. 140.

at Pepin's court, and is said to have married his daughter.

The army of the Franks appeared on the mainland, by a secret agreement with the Doge, and before preparations could be made for opposing it. But the common danger became at once a bond of union; the Venetians forgot their discords and their quarrels, and rose as one man to defend their liberty. Almost from the first the Doge was suspected of treachery; he was watched, he was convicted by his own acts, he was taken, and he paid for his treason with his life. His severed head was set up on a pike on the beach of Malamocco, where the enemy could watch how the carrion birds came daily and picked it to a skull.

But the Franks took the nearer islands one by one, till at last the Venetians left Malamocco and sought refuge on the Rialto and Olivolo, which were the more easy to defend, as it was harder for the enemy to reach them. A legend says that one poor old woman stayed behind, resolved to save Venice or perish in the attempt, and we are told that she went to meet Pepin and counselled him to build a wooden bridge that should extend all the way from Malamocco to Rialto, and that Pepin followed her advice; but the horses of his army were scared by the dancing lights on the water, and by the swaying of the light bridge, and they plunged and reared and fell off into the lagoon,

Mol. Dogaressa, 29.

809 A.D.

Pepin at the siege of Rialto, A. Vicentino; Pepin's defeat, by the same; Ducal Palace, Sala dello Scrutinio.

and they and their riders were drowned by thousands, like Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

A more likely story tells us that the Franks had no light boats of shallow draft, and that in pursuing the Venetians their heavier vessels got aground in the intricate channel, so that the Venetians surrounded them, ship by ship, and did them to death conveniently and at leisure.

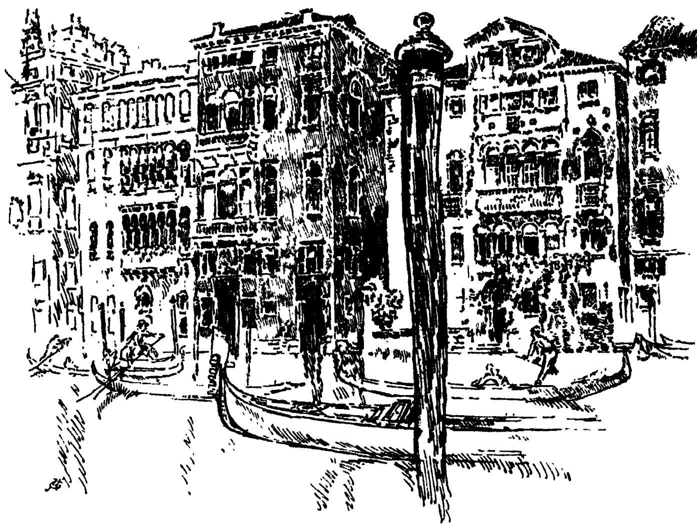
Be that as it may, Pepin was defeated and forced to give up the attempt, and when he had burned everything on the islands he had taken, he went away, in anger and humiliation, towards Ravenna. Thereafter, when peace was made between him and the Eastern Empire, Venice was reckoned with the East.

Among those who most distinguished themselves during the short struggle was Agnello, or Angiolo Partecipazio, a member of one of the most renowned families of the former tribunes. Sismondi says, I cannot find with what authority, that this noble house changed its name to Badoer, in the tenth or eleventh century, under which name it still lives. It was this Angiolo who persuaded the people to retire to Rialto, by which measure Pepin was defeated, and when the war was over he was soon elected Doge.

His first step was to fortify Rialto, which from that day became the seat of government, and the small neighbouring islands were soon united to it. Upon them grew up what was the beginning of modern Venice, eleven hundred years ago, and the waste land-

was covered with dwellings, towers, churches, and religious houses in a wonderfully short time.

The devout tendencies of the people had changed little since the first fugitives had placed the islands under the protection of those several tutelary saints whose relics they had saved, and the descendants of



GRAND CANAL, NEAR RIALTO

those early emigrants now cast about for a holy patron who should, as it were, guarantee to them the blessing of Heaven. They then remembered the ancient legend: how Saint Mark the Evangelist was shipwrecked and cast upon the shores of Rialto, and how he heard a mysterious voice saying, 'Pax tibi Marce, Evangelista meus'; that is, 'Peace be with thee, O

Mark, my Evangelist.' And the words became the motto of the Republic.

The devotion to Saint Mark grew at an amazing rate after the revival of this old tradition, and it became the dream of every Venetian to obtain relics of the Evangelist's body. This precious treasure was at that time preserved in Alexandria, and was therefore in the power of the Mussulmans; but a strict ordinance of the Emperor Leo, to which the Doge had been obliged to agree on behalf of the Venetians, forbade all intercourse with the unbelievers, even for purposes of commerce.

Two Venetian merchants and navigators, Buono da Malamocco and Rustico da Torcello, determined to risk their lives and fortunes in disobeying the imperial decree. They fitted out a very fast vessel and freighted her with merchandise for the Eastern market, and set sail without declaring their real destination. Reaching Alexandria with a fair wind, they proceeded at once to the basilica in which the body of the saint was kept, and obtained possession of it by the simple process of bribing the men in charge of the church. Here the story says that they placed their treasure in the bottom of a cart, and heaped salt pork upon it, as much as the mules could draw, sure that no Mussulman would touch the unclean meat; and so they passed through the city and got on board of their ship, and put to sea that very night.

Rom. i. 168.

When they came near home, sailing with a fair wind and the blessing of Heaven and Saint Mark, they sent

a light boat into the lagoons to inform the Doge that they were bringing the Evangelist's body; for they were sure that he and their fellow-citizens would gladly forgive them for having disobeyed the imperial decree. Then all the people gathered on the shore as the ship came in; and the noblest of Venice took the priceless burden upon their shoulders and bore it to the private chapel of the ducal palace, where it was to remain in state until a church could be built for it; and a great cry of 'Viva San Marco' rang from street to street, and from island to island, even up to Grado and down to Malamocco, and it was ever afterwards the war-cry of Venice. Thus was Saint Mark proclaimed protector of the Republic, and the words which he himself had heard became the nation's motto; and Saint Theodore took the second rank, though he had been patron of the lagoons ever since the days of Narses and Justinian.

About 828 A.D. Translation of the body of St. Mark, mosaic of the XIIIth century on the façade of the Basilica.

It was clear to those simple believers that Saint Mark had not come among them against his will. Had he been displeased with the change from Alexandria to Venice a storm would surely have arisen in the night, and the holy relics would have disappeared in thunder, lightning, and rain, to return to their former resting-place or to be miraculously transported to another; for such was the pleasure of the saints in the dark ages. But Saint Mark remained where he was, pleased, no doubt, with the homage of that glad young

people, and rejoicing already in the glories they should attain under his patronage; and from this complaisance the Venetians naturally concluded that a divine blessing had descended upon them, and they became once more a single family, bonded as brothers to stand and win together.

But before pursuing the great story of what came afterwards, let us stand awhile on the threshold of the tenth century and look at Venice as she was a few years after Saint Mark had taken her under his special protection.

In the first place, the alternate currents caused by the tide and the rivers were not yet completely controlled by stone-faced canals, and in many places the soil still consisted of long stretches of unstable mud, upon which the tide threw up masses of seaweed that lay rotting in the sun. The only means of obtaining a firm foundation for a stone building on such ground lay in laboriously driving piles, side by side, and so close that each one touched the next, and the whole formed a solid surface. It was a slow method, it was costly and required considerable skill; but the result was good, and has stood the test of a thousand years, for there are buildings standing to-day on piles driven in the year 900.

It follows that in the tenth century the majority of dwelling-houses were still only light constructions of wood, which could stand upon the mud without danger of sinking. There were many stone buildings already, however, but like their humbler neighbours they mostly

had only one story above the ground floor, with small windows on the outside, and larger ones on the inner court, and all alike were roofed with thatch. It is hard to imagine Venice a thatched city, of all cities in the world; yet the reason of the peculiarity is plain enough. Neither brick nor tiles could be made from the soft mud of the lagoons, a wooden house cannot have a flat roof, and the construction of a vaulted roof upon a stone house requires a greater skill in building than the Venetians then possessed.

Sagredo.

In building ordinary dwellings, Sagredo tells us that the usual method was to lay down a floor of heavy planks, upon which a thick layer of mortar and small pebbles was spread out and beaten down to a hard surface; upon this again a second layer of cement mixed with pounded bricks was spread, and this was beaten with heavy wooden beaters till it was perfectly hard and even. Precisely the same method is employed to-day in southern Italy; and it was from this beginning that the so-called 'Venetian pavement' soon developed. For rich people caused small pieces of coloured marbles, and even of mother-of-pearl, to be set into the cement of the second layer, which was then no longer beaten, but rolled with a ponderous stone roller and then rubbed down with a smooth stone and sand, and water, and at last polished to a brilliant surface. To this day the 'Venetian pavement' is made in this way in all parts of the world. The Venetians had probably inherited the art directly from the Romans, together with some knowledge of mosaic, which it roughly resembles.

The polished floor of the main room was an especial object of pride in the eyes of good housekeepers.

The Venetian houses resembled those of the Romans in many respects. A covered portico, surrounding a closed court, gave access to the 'hall of the fireplace,' as the principal place of gathering for the family was named, and to the kitchens and offices. The upper story consisted entirely of bedrooms, and had a wide balcony called the 'liago'—a word corrupted from the Greek *heliacon*, 'a place of sunshine.' Here in warm weather the family spent the evening. Higher still, a rustic wooden platform was built over a part of the gabled and thatched roof, and was called the 'altana.' It was here that the linen was dried after washing, and later, in Titian's day, it was here that the Venetian ladies exposed their hair to the sun after moistening it with the fashionable dye.

The 'hall of the fireplace' was more than any other part of the house a special feature of Venetian dwellings, and was as necessary to them as the balcony that ran round the inner court. To this day the Venetians boast that their ancestors invented the modern chimney flue, and that while King Egbert still warmed himself like a savage before a fire of which the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof, the poorest Venetian fisherman had a civilised fireplace before which he could warm his toes as comfortably, and with as little annoyance from smoke, as any fine lady of the twentieth century.

Mut. Costumi.

Another peculiarity of the early Venetian house

which has come down to our day was that it almost always had two entrances, the one opening upon the



A WATER DOOR NEAR S. BENEDETTO

water, and the other, at the back, upon land. In those days this back door almost always gave access to a bit of garden, in which flowers and a few kitchen vegetables

were carefully cultivated, but these gardens were soon crowded out of existence by the necessity for larger and more numerous houses.

The palace of the Doge differed from other Venetian dwellings chiefly by its size and its battlemented walls, and was very far from resembling what we see to-day in its place. It was destroyed by fire again and again, and only here and there some fragment of the original walls was incorporated in the new buildings which the doges were so often obliged to construct for themselves. A high battlemented wall joined the island of Olivolo with Rialto and enclosed the ducal palace.

The churches were out of all proportion richer and better cared for than the private dwellings, and were generally built after the model of the Roman basilica, with an apse and a portico for worshippers, which frequently served as a shelter for all sorts of little shops and money-changers' booths, very much like the temple in Jerusalem. These churches have been rebuilt and repaired again and again till there is little left of the originals; but many fragments of them have been used again, here a light column, there a bit of mosaic, a carved capital, a piece of early sculpture or a delicate marble tracery—all of them, more often than not, of better workmanship and in purer taste than the later buildings they now help to adorn.

The centre and focus of Venetian life was Saint Mark's Square, but it was altogether a different place in those days. It was, indeed, nothing but an irregular open space, a field of mud in winter, a field of dust

in summer, divided throughout its length by a small dyked canal called the Rivo Battario. On opposite sides of the latter, and opposite to each other, there were then still standing the chapels dedicated by Narses to Saint Theodore and to the holy martyrs Geminianus and Menus.

Monumenti artistici ecc. 1859.

Furthermore, the foundations of the Campanile, which fell in 1902, were already laid, but the work was not advancing quickly, and the surrounding space was obstructed by the heaps of materials which had been prepared for the construction. As for the church of Saint Mark, the one that was then standing must have strongly resembled the next, which was built on its ruins by the Doge Pietro Orseolo after it had been burnt down in 975. It was in the shape of a Greek cross, and was approached by a portico like almost all churches of that time. We know also that it was roofed with thatch.

There were as yet no bridges across the canals, though we may perhaps suppose that there was a single one, built of wood, between Rialto and Olivolo, and at that time there was no great number of boats, and there were none that resembled the gondola for its lightness and speed. Many of the smaller canals were afterwards dug for the convenience of getting about by water, where in the tenth century there were narrow lanes, dark and muddy, and the receptacles of whatever people chose to throw out of their windows. Then, and long afterwards, men went about on foot if they were poor, or on horses and mules if they were rich. When water

had to be crossed there were flat-bottomed ferry-boats



NARROW WATER LANE

for man and beast. The word 'gondola' seems to have

been applied indiscriminately to several kinds of boats, at least by writers, and even included the heavy barges, manned by many oars, which towed sea-going vessels in and out of the harbour, through the intricate channels of the lagoons.

There were trees in Venice in those days, both scattered here and there, and also growing in little groves, where young people gathered in the fine season to pass an hour in singing and dancing and story-telling, and in making music on stringed instruments of fashions and shapes now long forgotten. The most common trees were the oak, the cypress, and the 'umbrella' pine, which latter is believed to be indigenous in Italy; but there were cork-trees, too, and one of them afterwards played a part in the tragedy of Bajamonte Tiepolo, the great conspirator.

Mut. Costumi.

Venice had charm even then, in spite of her narrow and unsavoury lanes, her winter's mud, and the dust of her summer heat. The pretty little thatched houses, side by side along the water's edge; the handsome churches gleaming with mosaic fronts; the dark cypress-trees and stone pines, and the vividly green oaks; the battlemented towers reared here and there against the clear blue sky; the rippling waters of the lagoon; the vessels great and small, with sails pure white or dyed a rich madder brown—there was colour everywhere, then as now, there was air, there was sunshine; and there was then, what now there is no more, the movement, the elastic youth, the gladness of a people's life just ready to bloom for the first time.

They led easy lives, those early Venetians, compared with the existence of the Italians on the peninsula, easy and even luxurious, and their constant intercourse had given them the love of jewels and silk and all rich and rare things. Even in the days of Charlemagne, the



ON THE GIUDECCA

dames of Venice wore robes and mantles and veils which an empress would not have disdained.

Charlemagne himself, on his way to Friuli, once halted at Pavia just when the great fair was held which best of all others displayed the wealth and industry of all Italy; and the Venetians had brought thither the rich merchandise with which they had loaded their ships in the East, and had spread out

Mut. Costumi.

their splendid stuffs, their soft Persian carpets, and their costly furs.

Then the rough Franks were ashamed of their coarse garments, and began to buy all manner of fine woven materials to take the place of their woollen tunics and their leathern coats. But not long afterwards, when they were all hunting in the deep forest, a great storm came up and broke upon them, and the rain beat through their silks and the thorns tore their finery to shreds, and they were in a sad plight. Then the giant Emperor laughed aloud at their mishap, and asked them whether the goatskin jerkin he wore was not worth ten of their soft Venetian dresses when the rain was pelting down and the winter wind was howling through the wild-boar's lair.

The old paintings leave us in no doubt as to the Venetian fashions of the tenth century. The nobles wore a long tunic tightened to the waist by a belt or girdle, and over this they threw a mantle of rich material which in winter was lined with fur, and which was fastened on one shoulder with a golden pin, like the fibula of the Romans or the brooch of the Highlander. On his head the noble wore a cap oddly adorned with two ribbands which made a Saint Andrew's cross in front.

The dress of the matrons was not very different, but the cloak was pinned together on the breast instead of on one shoulder, and was cut with a train. The ladies, moreover, wore tunics cut low at the neck, even in winter and out of doors, which seems strange enough,

though it accounts for the quantities of rich fur they used. Their splendid hair fell loose upon their shoulders from beneath a little gold-embroidered cap, instead of which young girls often wore a very fine gauze veil.

The labouring people seem to have confined their taste for variety to the selection of colours suitable to the occupations they followed, and therefore least likely to show wear and tear and stain.

Every one worked hard in those young days, from the Doge downwards, at the administration of the Republic, at beautifying the city, at commerce and the development of navigation; and as for play, they were passionate lovers of the chase and of grebe-shooting. The latter sport was the delight of rich and poor alike, apparently without much regard to the time of year, but its strict rules hindered any wholesale slaughter. The sportsman dressed himself in green in order that his figure might not scare the grebes, as he poled his narrow punt—the 'fisolara'—amongst the sedge and reeds at the mouths of the rivers. If he had boatmen to help him, they wore green too. Now it seems to have been the rule that no weapon should be used in this sort of shooting but the cross-bow, charged with clay bullets or with small bolts, and it would have been thought as unsportsmanlike to snare the birds as it is nowadays to catch trout with worms; and as the grebe is a great diver when in danger, and is by no means easy to hit with a good shot-gun, it must have required remarkable skill to shoot him with such a poor weapon as the cross-bow of the tenth century. The Venetians

Mut. Costumi.

used to fasten the heads of the birds they killed upon doors and windows as trophies, just as a Bavarian gentleman or a Black Forester of our own time mounts the horns of every roebuck he shoots and hangs them in his hall.

If I have dwelt too long upon these details it is

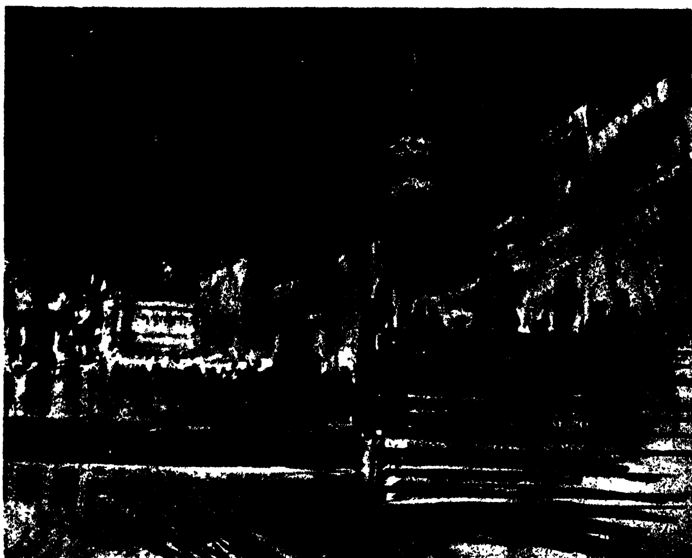


THE STEPS OF THE SALUTE

because I am inclined to think that a sportsmanlike spirit has characterised all young nations; and the spirit of the true sportsman is not to kill wantonly, but to measure himself in strength, or skill, or speed, against his fellow-man, and against wild things, and often against nature herself, with fairplay on both sides; and the true delight of his sport lies in doing for pleasure

what his ancestors were forced to do in the original struggle for life.

And so after this brief glance at early Venice, I go on to speak of the circumstances and the men that presently directed the young state to a form of development which was without example in the past history of nations, and was destined to have no imitators in the future.



THE RIVA AT NIGHT

IV

VENICE UNDER THE FAMILIES OF PARTECIPAZIO, CANDIANO, AND ORSEOLO

For historical purposes it is best to consider that Venice was really founded in the year 811. From that date till 1032 the ducal throne was occupied, with only three exceptions, by a Partecipazio, a Candiano, or an Orseolo. It is true that every Doge was elected, but the great families would hardly have been human if

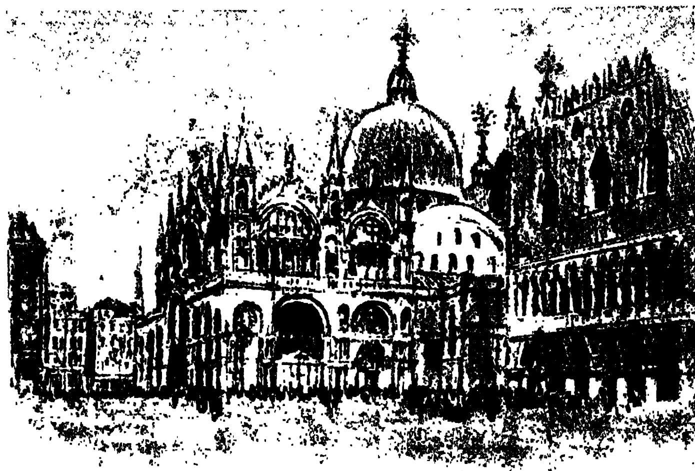
they had not done their best to make the dignity hereditary.

They were not afflicted by that strange fatality under which the Roman Cæsars almost always died without male issue, and which led the Emperors to adopt their successors and to make them coadjutors in their government, generally with tribunitian powers; and four centuries were to elapse before the race of Hapsburg was to fasten itself at last upon the Holy Roman Empire, never to be shaken off so long as it could beget sons, or even daughters. The great Venetian races were vital and fortunate, and reared generation after generation for ages, with hardly any diminution of strength or wit.

But the principle on which they attempted to secure to themselves the succession to a power which was hereditary was the same which the Romans followed before them and which the Hapsburgs were to adopt long afterwards. They chose their own successors amongst those nearest to them, educated them to government, made them helpers in their rule, and designated them in their wills to succeed in their places.

There was always discontent after each election, and there were often serious riots; several doges of this period were forced to abdicate, or were even exiled, and one of them, at least, was assassinated; but the thirst of the great families for hereditary power was not diminished, and each revolutionary rising was directed by an aristocratic faction which had everything to gain by overthrowing the one in office.

Yet, strange to say, this disturbed condition of things neither hindered nor retarded the growth of national prosperity. The three factions quarrelled about the ducal throne for two hundred years, but their commercial activity was not in the least diminished by their



ST. MARK'S

differences. They and the less powerful nobles possessed the financial instinct in the highest degree; the citizen class vied with them as traders and usurers, and though they could not outdo them, having started behind them in the race for wealth, they often rivalled them; and as for the people, they were the ready and willing instruments of their masters, they were intrepid

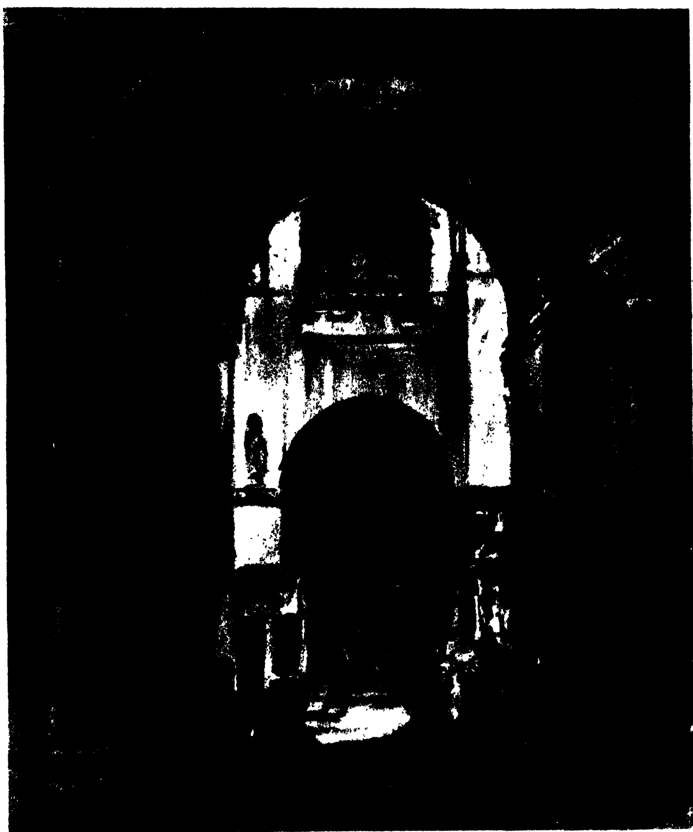
sailors, they were patriotic soldiers, they were hard-working labourers, and they seem to have cared very little who was Doge, so long as every effort they made contributed directly to their own well-being. And this was always the case, as in every young and successful state.

Nevertheless, the continual state of discord between the strongest families of the aristocracy was not without its bad results, and enemies abroad found it easy to strike unexpected blows at the Republic, when she was least prepared to retaliate. Chief among these enemies were the Dalmatian pirates, whose principal stronghold was the city of Narenta, situated at the head of the gulf of that name, almost over against Ancona. The Venetians seem to have been more than a match for the corsairs when actually at sea, for their merchant vessels were fast sailers and were well armed; but the Dalmatians lost no opportunity of descending upon any corner of the Republic's island territory which chanced to be left unprotected, and they plundered and laid waste the land, and carried off the people into slavery.

One of these sudden descents of the corsairs on the day of the yearly marriage ceremonies was not only strikingly dramatic in itself, but became one of the turning-points in the history of the Republic. In order that what happened may be clearly understood, I must in the first place briefly explain how marriages were made, and how they were always celebrated in Venice on the thirty-first of January at that time; for I cannot remember that a similar custom ever obtained in any other city ancient or

Molmenti, Vita Privata.

modern. I may add, however, that in their claims to an extravagantly ancient descent the Venetians pre-



A CHAPEL, ST. MARK'S

tended to have inherited the usage directly from the Babylonians.

However that may be, it is quite certain that in those

days the brides of Venice were all married on the thirty-first of January, the anniversary of the translation of Saint Mark's body, in the church of San Pietro



THE PORCH, ST. MARK'S

d'Olivolo, which was always the cathedral, and which now became the scene of one of the strangest and most romantic events in the history of any nation,

rivalled, but certainly not surpassed, by the half-mythic rape of the Sabines in the Forum.

In old Venice the women were treated very much as they have always been in the East. They were naturally dignified and reserved, or enjoyed that reputation, but the men were jealous, and would not trust in anything so inward and spiritual as good qualities. They held that the equilibrium of feminine virtue, though always admirable, is generally of the kind described in mechanics as unstable; in other words, that it resembles the balance of a pyramid when poised on its apex rather than its security when established on its base. They therefore watched their wives and daughters and kept them at home a great deal, insisting that they should veil themselves when they went to church, and on the rare occasions when they were allowed to go elsewhere. The maidens wore veils of pure white, but the married women were allowed colours. The only exception to the rule of the veil was made on the days of the 'Sagre,' the feasts of the patron saints in the different parishes of the city; then even the girls were allowed to wear their beautiful hair floating on their shoulders, and confined only by chaplets of flowers. Those were the only times when the men had a chance of seeing them to judge of their beauty, and perhaps to choose a wife amongst them, and they made the most of it; we may even suppose that the custom had been originally introduced as a necessary one if young men and maidens were ever to be betrothed at all.

De Gubernatis e Bernoni.

One sight sufficed, perhaps, and a glance or two exchanged as the long processions of men and women went up into the churches or came out again ; and after that, when the nights were fine, the youth took his lute and went and made music under the chosen one's window. But she never looked out, nor showed him so much as the tips of her white fingers in the moonlight ; that would have been unmaidenly and bold. If her heart softened to his appealing song, a single ray of light from between the close-drawn shutters was answer enough ; if not, all remained dark, while the unhappy lover sang his heart out to the silent lagoon. But being reassured by the friendly ray, not once but many times, the aspirant went to the girl's father and begged permission to make her his 'novice'—that meant his betrothed—until the next feast of blessed Saint Mark.

When the youth and maid were secretly agreed, the course of love generally ran smooth, and the real courtship began. Manners were simple still, dowries were small, the only conditions to be considered were those of rank and faction ; and few lovers would have been bold enough to play a Romeo's part in Venice, while the lines of caste were even then so closely drawn that still fewer would have thought of overstepping them. Therefore, if the young man was of as good a family as the young girl, and if he did not belong to some rival faction, the betrothal was announced at a great dinner, at which the families of both met in the house of the maiden's parents. Then the youth renewed his request

efore them all, and the maid was brought to him ressed all in white, and he slipped upon her finger a



ST. MARK'S

ery plain gold ring, then called the 'peg ... which is o say, the pledg... times the eng... and ... was

presided over by a priest, and became thereby more solemn and unbreakable.

The time of betrothal was called the noviciate, as if marriage were one of the holy orders to enter which a term of trial is exacted; and while it lasted small gifts were exchanged. So, at Easter, the young man brought a special sort of cake; at Christmas, preserves of fruit; on Lady Day, a posy of rosebuds. On her side the young girl gave him a silk scarf, or something made with her own hands. It is told that the daughter of a Doge spent three years in embroidering with silk and gold a shirt which she meant to give to the unknown youth whom she expected to love some day.

When the young people came of rich families they gave each other also small trinkets, notably those little chains of gold called 'entrecosei,' which were specially made by Venetian goldsmiths. Moreover, whether the presents were trinkets or silk scarfs, cakes or rosebuds, they all had reference to good luck much more than to anything else, and it would not have been safe for either party to send a gift not included in the old-fashioned list. For the Venetians were superstitious. Like all young races whose fortune lies before them, they saw signs of success or failure in small things at every turn. They judged of the immediate future by the pictures they saw in the coals of their great wood fires, especially in cases of approaching marriage, by the accidental spilling of red wine on the cloth, by the passing of a hunchback on the right or the left. To upset red wine was lucky; to upset olive oil presaged death; it was

thought to indicate a great misfortune if a man going out of his own house came first upon an old woman. Similarly, when young people were betrothed, there were objects which they could on no account give each other as presents. The forbidden things were chiefly such as magicians were supposed to use in their incantations, and among these, strangely enough, nothing was reckoned more certainly fatal to happiness than a comb. If any youth had dared to offer one, however beautiful, to his future bride, she would have unhesitatingly returned his ring.

At that time the Church did not require the publication of banns, a regulation which became necessary in order to put a stop to abuses of a less simple age. Instead, a second festive meeting was held at the house of the bride a few days before the marriage; and this time, besides the near relations of both families, the 'convicini,' the 'fellow-neighbours,' were bidden, as the ancient Romans entertained their clients on great occasions.

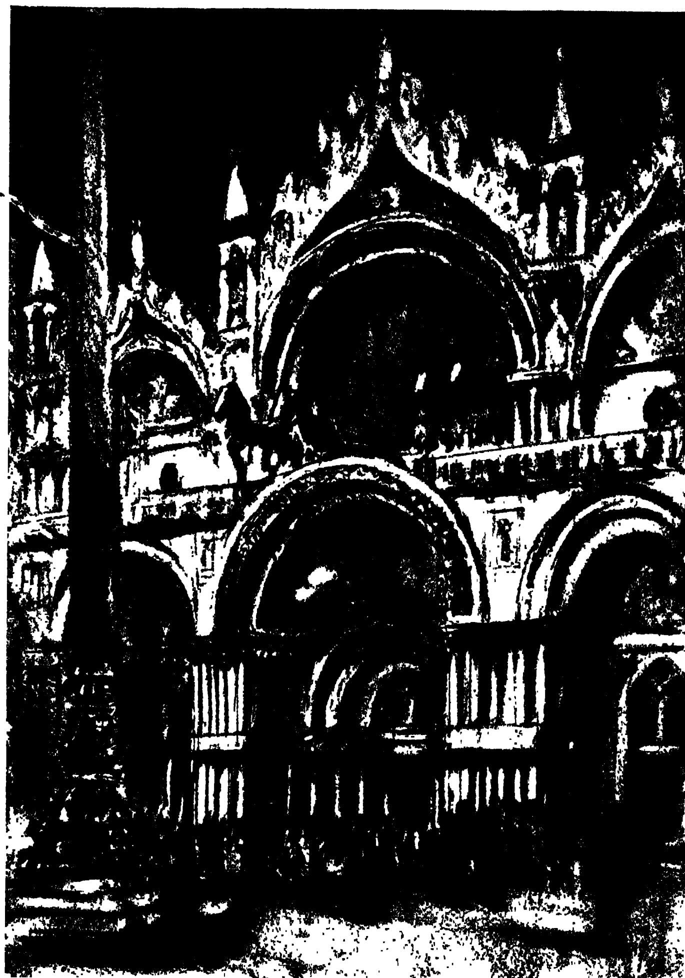
The bride now waited in her own room, which was always upstairs, until all the guests were assembled in the 'hall of the fireplace' on the ground floor. When the time came, the oldest man of the family went up to fetch her, and she appeared leaning on his arm. She stood still a moment on the threshold of the hall and then made a step and half—neither more nor less—towards the assembly. Next, and leaving her companion's arm, she made a 'modest little leap' forwards, which she followed with a deep courtesy, and then, with-

out saying a single word, she went upstairs to her room and stayed there while the feast proceeded. The only variation in the ceremony occurred in cases where the family was of such high rank that the bride and bridegroom, with their friends and near relations, were expected to visit the Doge.

When the long-expected day, the thirty-first of January, came at last, every house in which there was a novice was astir hours before daybreak, and the friends of each were waiting under the windows in their boats long before the sun was up. Meanwhile the bride was dressed for the day, more or less richly according to her fortune, but always in a long white gown, and with fine threads of gold twined amongst her flowing hair.

She then came down from her own room to the hall of the fireplace, where her father awaited her, and she knelt meekly before him and her mother to receive their solemn blessing and her dowry, which it was customary that the bride should carry to the church herself, enclosed in a casket called the 'arcella'—the 'little ark.' The historians tell us that it was never a very heavy burden in those days.

This little ceremony took place at early dawn in every house where there was to be a wedding, and before the sun was up the brides were all gathered in the cathedral, where they ranged themselves round the altar, holding their caskets in their hands. Then at last the bridegrooms made their appearance, arrayed in the richest of their clothes, and accompanied by their best men, as we should say—their 'sponsors of the



DOOR OF ST. MARK'S

ring' in their own phrase. But I find no mention of any bridesmaids.

The bishop blessed all the young couples, and each bridegroom slipped upon his lady's finger the symbolic ring, which was the same for all. After that, gifts of virgin wax were left for the candles of the cathedral, and each newly-married man was expected to give a sum of money 'in proportion with his opinion of his wife's beauty'—probably the most elastic measure ever ordained for the giving of alms. This money formed a fund out of which poor brides of the people received a dowry in the following year. A malicious writer even hints that this secret fund was sometimes misapplied to compensate for such ugliness as would otherwise have been a bar to marriage altogether.

The Doge himself was invariably present in state during the ceremony, which therefore had a distinctly official character.

On leaving the cathedral sweetmeats and small cakes were showered upon the crowd that waited without, and the respective wedding parties returned to the homes of the brides to spend the rest of the day in the rather noisy gaiety and uproarious feasting that belonged to those times, and to which each bridegroom's best man was expected to contribute with a present of rare liquors and rich old wines.

When evening came at last the brides were led to their new homes with song and playing of many instruments; and on the next morning each young couple received from the best man a symbolical gift of fresh eggs

and of certain aromatic pastilles of which the composition is unfortunately forgotten. Last of all, the bride was



FROM THE GALLERY, ST. MARK'S

given a work-basket, containing a needle-case, a thimble, and similar useful objects, to symbolise the industry she was expected to display in her household duties.

Now it came to pass, in the reign of the Doge Pietro Candiano III., about the year 959, that a gang of Istrian pirates conceived the bold idea of descending upon the cathedral on the marriage morning, and of carrying off bodily the brides and their dowries.

Rom. i. 234.

At that time the Arsenal was not built, and the little island on which it stands, and which lies close to Olivolo, was still uninhabited. During the night between the thirtieth and the thirty-first of January the corsairs ran their light vessels under the shelter of this island, and stole ashore while it was yet dark, to lie in wait in the shadow near the cathedral.

As usual the brides came first, with their families, and ranged themselves round the high altar, with their caskets in their hands, to wait for their affianced husbands. At that moment the pirates rushed into the church, armed to the teeth and brandishing their drawn swords in the dim light of the lamps and candles. There was no struggle, no resistance; the unarmed men, most of them elderly and at best no match for the daring robbers, were paralysed and rooted to the spot, the women screamed, the children fled in terror to the dark corners of the church, and in a moment the daring deed was done. It had been so well planned, and was executed with such marvellous rapidity, that the robbers reached their vessels, carrying the girls and their caskets in their arms, and succeeded in pushing off almost without striking a blow; and doubtless they laughed grimly as the light breeze filled their sails and

bore them swiftly out through the channels of the lagoons.



THE GREAT DOORWAY, ST. MARK'S

One may guess at the faces of the cheated bridegrooms when they reached the cathedral and came upon the hysterical confusion that followed upon the robbery.

There was no loss of time then, and there was little waste of words. The Doge headed them, dressed as he was in his robe of state, men found weapons where they could, and all made for the nearest boats, and sprang in and rowed like demons; for the pirates were still in sight. Then the breeze that had sprung up at sunrise failed all at once, and the Istrians tugged at their long sweeps with might and main; but the men of Venice gained on them and crept up nearer and nearer, and nearer still, and overtook them, and boarded them in the Caorle lagoon, and slew them to a man, themselves almost unhurt. Also the chronicler says, that of all those fair and frightened girls not one received so much as a scratch in that awful carnage; but the men's hands were red with the blood, and they could not wash them clean in the sea because it was red too; and so, red-handed and victorious, they brought their brides back to land and married them before the sun marked noon, and the rejoicing was great.

These things happened as I have told, and though the chroniclers do not all agree precisely as to the year, the differences between their dates are not important, and all tell how the event was commemorated down to the last days of the Republic. For it appears that a great number of those men who so bravely pursued the pirates were box-makers, 'casseleri,' of the parish of Santa Maria Formosa, and when that famous day was over the Doge asked them what reward they desired. But they, being simple men, asked only that the Doge of Venice should come every year to their church on

the second day of February, which is the Feast of the Purification. 'But what if it rains?' asked the Doge, for that is the rainy season. 'We will give you a hat to cover you,' they answered. 'And what if I am thirsty?' the Doge asked, jesting. 'We will give you drink,' said the box-makers. So it was agreed, and so it was done, and the feast that was kept thereafter was called the Feast of the Maries, and it was one of the most graceful festivities of all the many that the Venetian imagination invented and kept. I shall describe elsewhere more fully how the Doge came to Santa Maria Formosa every year on the appointed day, and how, in memory of the bargain, the people of that quarter made him each year a present of straw hats and Malmsey wine. It was a sort of public homage to the women of Venice until the war of Chioggia, towards the end of the fourteenth century, and it is only fair to say that the lovely objects of such a splendid tribute did much to deserve it. But after that time many things were changed, and there remained of the beautiful Feast of the Maries nothing more than the Doge's annual visit to the church, instituted by Pietro Candiano III.

Rom. i. 240.

The immediate result of the bold attempt and condign punishment of the Istrian pirates was a series of punitive expeditions against them which laid the foundation of Venice's power on the mainland, and in this struggle, if in nothing else, the Doge was fortunate in his last years. But an evil destiny was upon him at home.

In his old age he associated one of his sons with

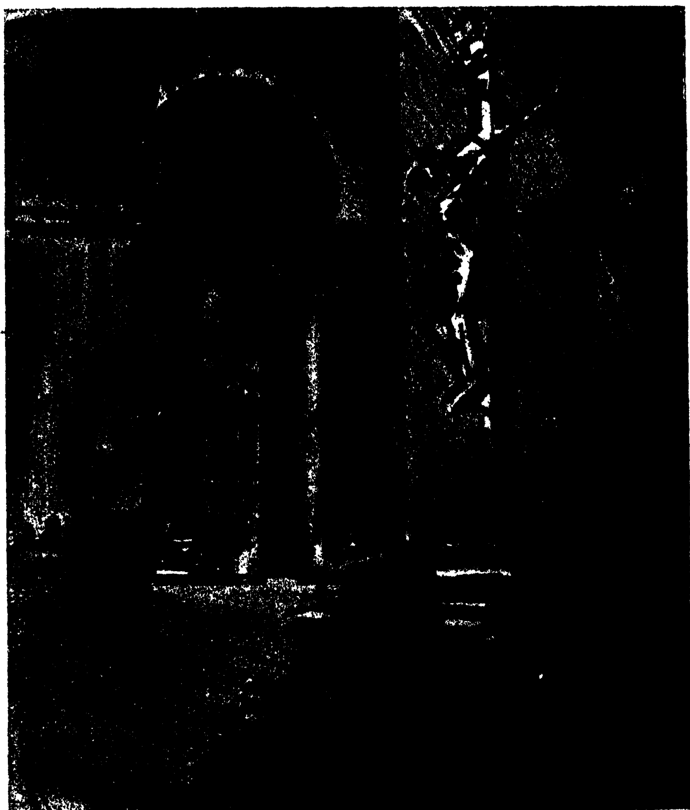
him in the ducal authority, also called Pietro, 'at the suggestion of the people,' says Dandolo in his chronicle. As I have said, this was the usual plan followed by the families that sought to make the dogeship hereditary. The younger Pietro was wild, ambitious, turbulent, and wholly without scruple, and he at once took advantage of his position to plot against his father, in the hope of reigning alone. But he was found out and hindered by the people, who rose suddenly in stormy anger and laid violent hands upon him, to kill him without trial. Yet his father was generous and succeeded in saving him from death, and tried him for his deeds, and sent him into exile.

Then Pietro the younger turned pirate himself, and armed six fast vessels and harassed the Venetian traders all down the Adriatic. But meanwhile he still had a strong party of friends for him in Venice, and their influence grew quickly, even with the people, and many secret influences which we can no longer trace were brought to bear for him; until at last the Venetians themselves, who had tried to murder him, decreed him the ducal crown and the supreme power, and recalled him and deposed his aged father. The old man died within a few weeks, and all he could bequeath to his wife was 'a vineyard surrounded by walls' on the shore of San Pietro; and Pietro Candiano IV. ruled alone.

Mol. Dogaressa.

He did outrageous deeds to strengthen his power. To win the protection of the Emperor Otho he forced his wife to take the veil in the convent of Saint Zacharias, and obliged his only son by her, Vitale, to

become a monk. Having thus disposed of them, he took to wife Gualdrada, the sister of the Marquis of



THE CHRIST OF ST. MARK'S

Tuscany, a princess of German origin, of great wealth, a subject and a relative of the Emperor himself.

Trusting in this great alliance, Pietro no longer

concealed the designs he entertained for himself and his family, branches of which were established in Padua and Vicenza, where they enjoyed, and certainly exacted, the highest consideration. Indeed, most of the Candiano men seem to have married women allied to reigning princes.

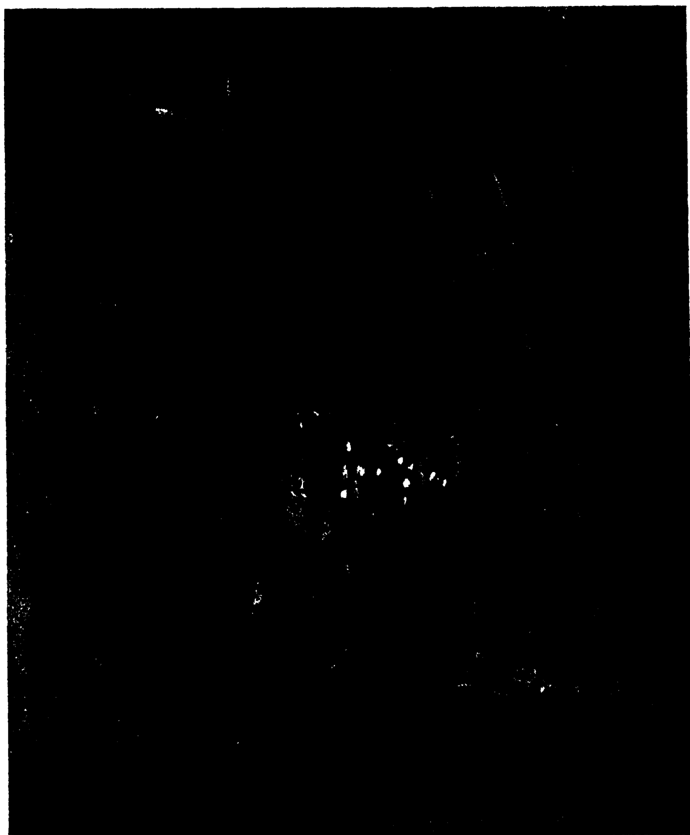
The Doge, their head, now garrisoned with German soldiers a number of fortresses in the neighbourhood of Ferrara, which had come to him with his wife; lastly, he did what every tyrant has done since history began, he surrounded himself with a mercenary bodyguard of desperate men who had everything to gain by his success, and everything to lose if he fell. After this he showed plainly enough that he meant to emancipate himself altogether from those counsellors which the Republic imposed upon him in all the important affairs of state.

He might have succeeded in any other state, but in Venice his was not the only family that aspired to the supreme power. His deeds had been violent, high-handed, outrageous, such as would condemn the chief of any community that called itself free; the Orseolo watched him, lay in wait for him, trapped him, and compassed his end. Following their lead, the people formed themselves into a vast conspiracy, and at a signal the ducal palace was surrounded on all sides.

The Doge would have fled, but it was too late, for every door was watched and strongly guarded. In his despair he attempted to take sanctuary in Saint Mark's church, which was connected with the palace by a dark and narrow entry. Thither he

976 A.D.

hastened, with his wife, their little child, and a few of his faithful bodyguard; but the conspirators had remem-



A SHRINE, ST. MARK'S

bered the secret corridor and were there, and they hewed him down, him and the child and every man of his attendants. The women they suffered to go unhurt.

Then they dragged out the dead bodies, even the child's, and gave them over to the rage of the furious populace to be spurned and insulted, until one just man, Giovanni Gradenigo, stood forth and claimed them, by what right I know not except that of decency, and buried them in the convent of Saint Hilary. Meanwhile the rabble had fired the palace, and the flames devoured it and spread to the church of Saint Mark; and further, a great number of houses were burnt down on that day, whereby the chiefs of the conspiracy were brought into discredit with those whose property was destroyed. But Pietro Orseolo was chosen to be Doge.

Now the dogess Gualdrada, breathing vengeance on them that had murdered her husband and her little son, took refuge on the mainland and came to Piacenza, to the court of the Empress Adelaide, who was the widow of Otho I. and the mother of Otho II., then reigning. There Gualdrada cast herself at Adelaide's feet and told her grief, imploring justice and righteous vengeance; and her cry was heard, for soon the young Emperor summoned Venice to account, not for the assassination of the Doge, but for violence done against Gualdrada and for the murder of her son.

Venice was in no state to face the Holy Roman Empire alone, and she obeyed the summons by sending the patrician Antonio Grimani to Piacenza, with orders to explain to the Empress that the Republic was not altogether responsible for the cruel deeds done by a handful of her citizens. The ambassador spoke long and well, setting forth the iniquities of the Doge Pietro

Candiano, and promising to make full reparation to Gualdrada.

There they sat, in the hall of the castle of Piacenza, the old Empress in her robes, surrounded by the flower of her northern knights, and before them Antonio Grimani, the ambassador, representing the person of the Doge Orseolo; and Gualdrada was not there, but the envoy of her brother, the Marquis of Tuscany, came to speak for her, appealing to the just sense of the court.

Rom. i. 252.
Mol. Dogaressa.

At a gesture from the Empress this personage came forward, bearing a sealed letter as his brief, written with Gualdrada's own hand, and he broke the seal, and presented to the ambassador of Venice the note of her demands. Then and there an inventory was made out of all the property, both personal and real estate, which had either composed her dowry, or which had been promised to her by her husband, or which should have been hers as the heiress of her murdered child; and Antonio Grimani did not hesitate, but promised for the Republic that everything should be restored.

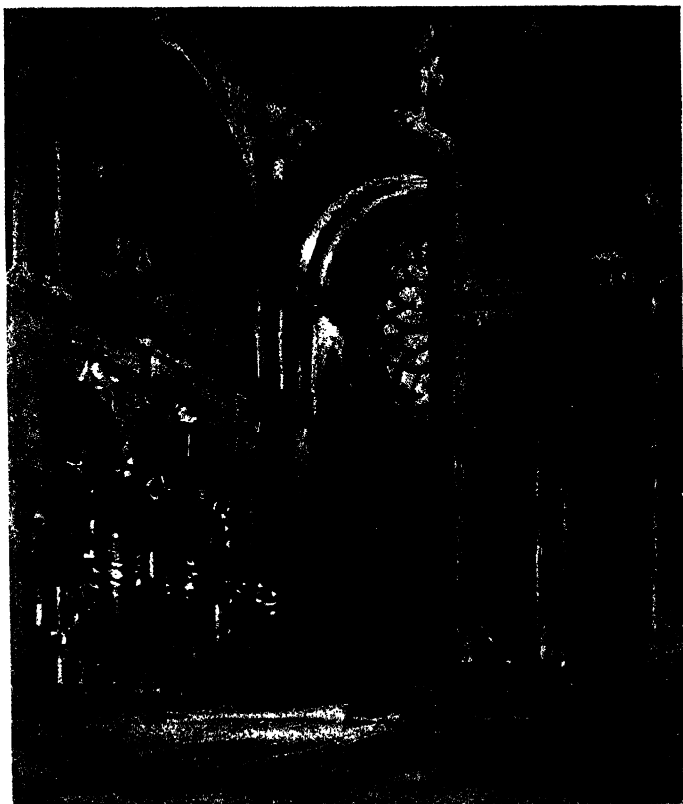
On her side Gualdrada then declared that she gave up all thoughts of vengeance against the state of Venice, the reigning Doge or his successors, and she signed with her own hand the solemn act which the imperial notary drew up, and by which the mutual engagement was ratified. So the grim business ended; and Gualdrada took lands and gold for her child's blood and her husband's, as was the manner in the Middle Ages, and went back to her Tuscan home, and lived finely, and

married, for aught I know, and was happy for ever afterwards.

Here, on the heels of tragedy, follows romance, in the same family of Candiano; or perhaps it is only legend, of the kind the old chroniclers loved so well.

Elena, the lovely daughter of a Pietro, we know not which, fell deep in love with Gherardo Guoro; and this love of hers was a great secret, for he was neither rich nor noble, and had small hope of being accepted as a son-in-law by a Doge who was always intriguing to make brilliant marriages for his family. But Elena had a nurse who loved her dearly and pitied the pair, and helped them to meet again and again, till at last they were married, and none but the old nurse knew it. Now, therefore, Gherardo sought fortune and set out on a voyage to the East; and while he was away, Pietro Candiano told his daughter that he would betroth her to Vittor Belegno. In her terror the girl's heart stood still, and she fell into a trance so death-like that it was mistaken for death itself, and on the same day, according to the immemorial custom of Italy, she lay in her coffin in the cathedral. But within a few hours, as love and fate would have it, Gherardo Guoro came sailing back, only to learn of her sudden death. Wild with grief he rushed to the cathedral, and by prayers, entreaties, and bribes, prevailed upon the sacristan to open the tomb, and help him to wrench off the lid of the coffin. When he saw her face his passionate tears broke out, and, lifting the beloved head, he kissed her

again and again; and his kisses brought the colour to her cheek, for she was not dead, and he held her in his



THE GREAT WINDOW, ST. MARK'S

arms, and she grew warm, and he took her alive out of the place of death, in a dream of wonder and joy. So when Pietro the Doge saw that his daughter was alive

again, he was glad, and forgave them both and blessed them; and afterwards they lived happily.

In point of age I think this is the oldest existing version of the story of Romeo and Juliet, and the one from which all the other forms of the legend were afterwards derived. It would be interesting to pursue the inquiry further, to find out how many different shapes the tale has assumed in the course of ages, and in how many instances it has been founded on fact; for that some of the stories are more than half-true I have not the slightest doubt.

The power of the Candiano family was broken when Pietro IV. and his little son were murdered, and the strong race of the Orseolo now seized the ducal throne, and tried to make it hereditary with themselves. They had cleared the way by violence, and they pursued their way to power without scruple. It was Pietro Orseolo who had been the soul of the revolution against the last Candiano, and it might have been expected that his supporters would set him up as Doge; but it seemed wiser to proceed more cautiously, and with singular foresight they put forward another member of the family, also called Pietro, a man of the most profound religious convictions, and who had led such a holy life that he was regarded as a saint on earth.

976 A.D.

The family were not mistaken in proposing his candidacy, a parallel to which may be found in the election of the saintly hermit, Pietro da Morrone, to be pope, by way of solving the difficulties which had

produced a long vacancy of the papal see. Pietro Orseolo was acclaimed Doge without opposition.

But piety is not always energy, and virtue has little or nothing to do with the greatness of princes. The holy man felt himself weak in the face of the troubles caused by the hatred of his own family for that of its predecessors in power, and when he saw what great responsibilities were accumulating upon his shoulders, and what dangers menaced the state, he quietly made up his mind to leave the world behind him and to end his life in a Camaldolese monastery in Aquitaine. I find the best account of this extraordinary vocation in Mr. Hazlitt's recent work (published in 1900); and incidentally I feel bound to say that this writer, whose original book has now developed to very solid dimensions, has searched the chronicles and later authorities upon Venetian history with a care and a conscientious thoroughness quite unequalled by any other historian who has treated of the same subject. We are free to differ with Mr. Hazlitt as to some of his conclusions, and as to the particular stories he has preferred to follow where the legends are many and contradictory; but for thorough and detailed accounts, according to the different chronicles, the English reader must go to him.

In the late summer of the year 977 the good Doge Orseolo received the visit of a learned and holy Frenchman, Warin, who was the Superior of the Abbey of Saint Michel de Cuxac in Aquitaine, and who had come to Venice to see for

Rom. i. 256.

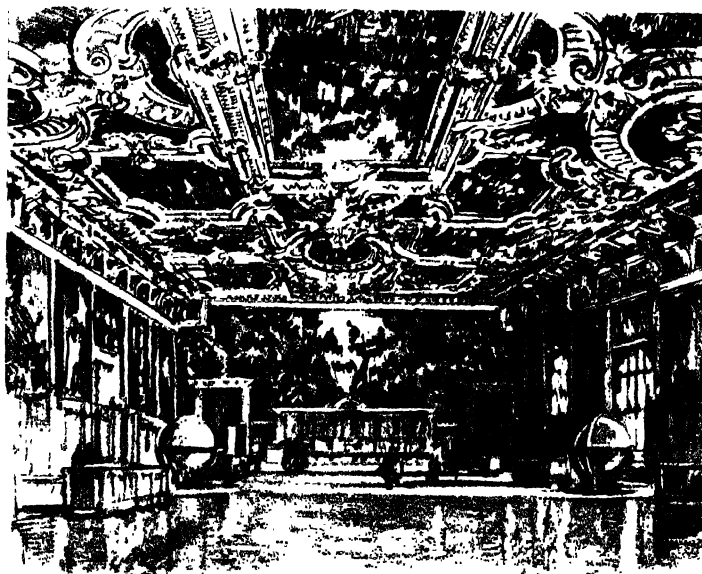
himself the place where the Evangelist was laid. The Doge received him as became his rank in the Church, and the two good men were drawn to each other by that profound though instantaneous sympathy which most of us have felt at least once in life. Of the two Warin had the stronger nature, and recognising the true monk in the devout Doge, he bade him give up the world, to which he had never really belonged, and follow his manifest vocation.

Hazlitt, i. 90.

Pietro Orseolo had been married at the age of eighteen to a maiden as virtuous as himself, and when one son had been born to the pair they had exchanged vows of chastity, and had afterwards given up their lives to the care of the poor, and to visiting the hospices and hospitals.

And now, long after that, Warin argued with Pietro and urged him more and more to renounce the world altogether; but Pietro was as wise as he was good, and he knew that it was his duty to leave everything in order for his successor, and he accordingly claimed a year in which to prepare for his retirement.

The monk Warin had to admit that he was right, and they parted on the first of September. On that same day, one year later, Warin returned and waited for the Doge in the monastery of Sant' Ilario. Pietro left his house alone in the night and joined him, dressed as a pilgrim; at midnight they mounted swift horses and set out upon their long journey westwards; and the fugitive was not missed till late on the following morning. Some accounts say that Orseolo's wife had





already taken the veil in the nunnery of Saint Zacharias; others assure us that she was dead. It matters little, for the one fact stands undenied, that Pietro Orseolo fled from the dogeship of Venice to be a novice in France, in one of the most rigid religious orders of that time. There he lived in peace for nineteen years till he died in the odour of sanctity; but over seven hundred years passed before he was officially canonised and took his place in the calendar, after which the French king returned his bones to Venice. There is a picture in the Museo Civico representing him and his wife dressed as monk and nun, and kneeling before a Madonna.

The policy of the Orseolo family in putting forward a saint to represent them had not been very successful, for after Pietro's flight they found themselves deserted by the factions they had led against Pietro Candiano IV.; and in the election which followed the holy man's sudden abdication, one more Candiano was chosen Doge in the person of Vitale, of that name. At the same time two powerful alliances were formed, the one between the Candiano and the Caloprini, of which the object seems to have been to set up some sort of despotic government under the protection of the Holy Roman Empire; the other between the Orseolo and the Morosini, who held to the old alliance with Byzantium and the East. Sismondi and others seriously derive the names of these two families from Greek words signifying, for Morosini, the 'Friends of Fools,' and for Caloprini, the 'People who bow themselves

skilfully'—in other words, perhaps, the dupes and their flatterers. Of the two it was the flatterers that came to grief, however, whereas the Morosini have continued to flourish even to our own time. I know not whether these derivations have any value. Victor Hugo, who did not know Greek, once suggested that the French word 'ironie' might be derived from the English word 'iron.'

Many bloody encounters took place, in which the nobles of Venice took sides with one party or the other, as their personal interests suggested, and at last the Caloprini, who were hated by the people, were forced to leave Venice. Yet trusting to the support of the Empress Adelheid, or Adelaide, in an evil hour they ventured to come back a few years later; but the Morosini, who had grown stronger in the meantime, fell upon them and put them all cruelly to death, so that of that great house only three widowed women remained alive to mourn the dead.

It was time that some strong hand should grasp the reins and drive the car of state through the slough of chaos and blood in which it was stuck fast, out upon the broad highway of fame. The hand was ready, and the time had come; in the year 991 Pietro Orseolo II. mounted the ducal throne.

From the first he threw all his energy into a systematic campaign against the pirates of the Adriatic, whose fathers had carried off the Venetian brides. They had paid for their rashness with their lives, and their descendants had never again come so near the city,

once a monastery of Benedictines. A man of imposing stature opened and let them in; but soon three fishermen came out by the same way and got into a skiff that lay waiting hard by, with two of their companions, for the larger boat had disappeared; and they pulled over to the city.

Then in the moonlight the skiff was quietly rowed all about the city, stopping here and there, wherever there was something worthy to be seen; and if any of the belated townsfolk noticed the little boat and its crew, no one guessed that it bore the young Emperor Otho himself, and the Doge, and the Secretary, Paul the Deacon, who himself tells the tale of the nocturnal visit. Having succeeded once, the Emperor came again, less secretly, and spent days in the Doge's palace, but still he preferred not to be openly known, so that he might be the more free to go about the city. There was a romantic strain in his short life, in his intense enthusiasm, in his profound belief in a divine right to reign; there was a faint foreshadowing of a stronger Emperor who is come in our own day to claim what he claimed, and to do, perhaps, what he could not do. With the strenuous reaching out after higher things Otho felt youth's longing to know, in an age when it was possible for one man to master all the knowledge of his time, and it was surely this desire that most of all brought him over to Venice that first time. Doubtless, too, because Venice was counted with the East, his advisers foresaw trouble in a too open friendship between him and the Doge. But his early death ended such danger,

if it ever existed, and all that remains is the story of his wanderings by night, in fisherman's dress, through the still and moonlit waterways of the young city.

Like the Partecipazio and the Candiano houses which had ruled before him, Pietro Orseolo now took measures to make the sovereignty hereditary in his family, by associating his own son Giovanni in the ducal honour, and further by marrying him to a Princess Mary, who was the daughter of one of the joint Emperors of the East and the niece of the other. The pair were united in Constantinople according to the Greek rite, and with the utmost pomp and magnificence, and Giovanni was given the rank of an imperial patrician. On their return to Venice, he and his beautiful bride were received by the people with demonstrations of enthusiastic joy, and, according to Sansovino, it was on this occasion, and at the express request of the Venetians themselves, that Giovanni was invited by his father to share in the power. It may well be, and it matters little.

Orseolo was much preoccupied by the still smouldering hatred of the Candiano family, and he sought to satisfy their ambition by marrying his second son, Domenico, to Imelda, grand-daughter of Pietro Candiano IV. and Richelda. His third son, Ottone, when still very young, he married to Geiza, sister of Saint Stephen, King of Hungary; and his daughter Hicela was given to the King of Croatia.

Mol. Dogaressa.

Strong in these alliances, still young in years, and richly endowed with the health and beauty that were

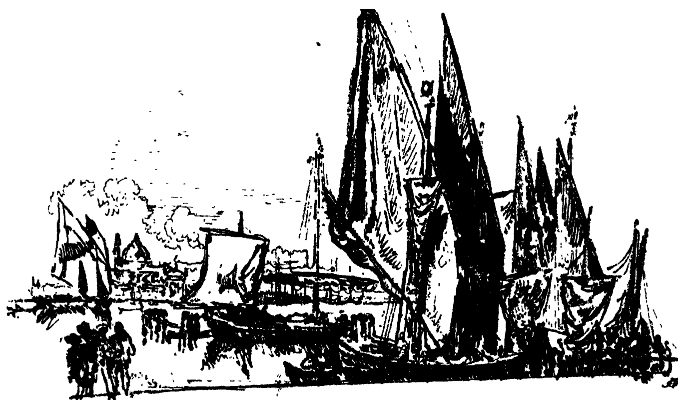
hereditary in his family, Orseolo II. might well have looked forward to a long and happy career, and to the certainty of leaving the sovereignty to his descendants throughout centuries to come. Then, about the year 1009, a comet suddenly appeared in the sky, and famine and plague ravaged Venice and the world. Amongst the very first victims were Giovanni and his young wife, and Orseolo himself did not long survive them. The mortality was such, according to old Dandolo, that there was not time to dig graves for all who died, and such tombs as were not full were opened and crammed with dead.

Ottone Orseolo succeeded his father, when the power of the name seemed at its height; but under him came the fall and exile of his family, and the end of the period during which the dogeship was more or less hereditary in the houses of Partecipazio, Candiano, and Orseolo. That period is a labyrinth of uncertainties and a maze of conflicting anachronisms. Scarcely two chroniclers place the same events in the same year, and they are rarely agreed as to matters even more important. Unmistakable history does not make its appearance in Venice till the eleventh century, and not till the descendants of Pietro Orseolo II., the greatest Doge who had yet reigned, were exiled from Venice, and excluded for ever, by a special law, from holding office under the Republic. They may have found some consolation in the fact that one of their house inherited the throne of Saint Stephen.

A few years later, the Doge Domenico Flabianico,

or Flobenigo, sustained by an assembly of the clergy and the people, introduced a law by which the chief of the Republic was forbidden to associate any one with himself in the power, and by which he was constrained to accept the 'assistance' of two counsellors. The nomination of these was the first step towards the creation of those many offices by which the Doge's action was limited little by little, till he became the mere figure-head, if not the scapegoat, of the Republic he was supposed to govern.

About 1032.



FISHING BOATS AT THE RIVA



THE GRAND CANAL FROM THE CA D' ORO

V

VENICE AND THE FIRST CRUSADES

It is not my intention to attempt in these pages an unbroken narrative of early Venetian history. Such attempts have been made by men of great and thorough learning, but they have failed in part or altogether because it is quite impossible to trust the only sources of information which have come down to us. These agree, indeed, more or less; that is, they agree just nearly enough to make it sure that something like the

event they narrate in such widely different ways actually took place, in some year to be chosen at will from the several dates they give. But that is all, until nearly the end of the Middle Ages.

One thing must not be forgotten: Venice was not the only maritime republic in Italy, even in the ninth and tenth centuries. There were at least three others, Amalfi, Genoa, and Pisa, which at that time were as prosperous, and seemed likely to be as long-lived, and of which the commerce in the eastern Mediterranean was already much more important than that of Venice. In the end Venice outdid them because she was isolated from Italy—literally 'isolated,' since she was built on islands in the sea.

England owes her independence, and the British Empire therefore owes its existence, to twenty-one miles of salt water. A much less formidable water barrier gave Venice a thousand years of self-government. The vast advantage of protection by water was perhaps not evident to the Venetians more than two or three times in their history, any more than the same advantage has been actually felt by Englishmen more than twice or thrice, but those few occasions were most critical; it has been present all the time, and the enemies of Venice, as of England, have always realised with dismay the difficulty of attacking a nation to whose country men cannot walk dry-shod.

The other three great maritime republics did not possess this prime permanent advantage of isolation by water. Amalfi was taken and retaken by land powers;

Pisa was ultimately subjugated by the Florentines, the landsmen who lived nearest to her; and Genoa, with a surviving semblance of freedom, became tributary to the House of Savoy in the eighteenth century. Venice alone of the four held her own till the days of Napoleon, protected to some extent, perhaps, by a sort of tacit but general European agreement to consider her a city of pleasure, but also, and always, by that water barrier, which multiplies the strength of a city's defenders tenfold, and divides to dangerously small fractions the powers of those that assail her.

It may seem fruitless to try to recall in a few words how Pisa and Genoa rose to maritime power; but it is not possible to pass over in silence the period during which Genoa, Venice's great rival, was growing up on the opposite side of the peninsula, nor the time in which Amalfi and Pisa were becoming powers in the Mediterranean.

Amalfi, most strange to say, though she was the first to disappear, left to the civilised world at large the greatest legacy. To one of her citizens, Flavio Gioia, we owe the mariner's compass; to her we owe the manuscript of the Pandects of Justinian, by which, as Sismondi justly says, all western Europe came back to the study and practice of Roman law; to Amalfi we owe those laws regulating maritime traffic, which are the foundation of the modern sea-law of civilised nations. And as if this were not enough for her glory, it is to Amalfi that the order of Knights Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem owes its

existence, the oldest order of knighthood that still survives, now known as the Sovereign Order of Malta.

At its greatest, the Republic of Amalfi embraced not more than fifteen or sixteen villages besides the little capital itself, scattered along the southern side of the Sorrentine peninsula, some perched on the inaccessible flanks and spurs of a mountain that rises out of the sea to a height of nearly five thousand feet, some built where wild gorges widen at the water's edge. That breakwaters were built out into the sea before Amalfi and Positano against the terrific south-westerly gales, we partly know and partly guess; that the capital and the dependent villages were strongly fortified may easily be proved. But what is left, though beautiful beyond description, is so little, and that little is so exiguous, that the thoughtful traveller asks with a sort of unbelieving wonder how the Amalfitans can ever have disputed the lordship of the sea with the greatest, and possessed their own rich quarter in every thriving harbour of the East; and how they can have given the maritime world its first rules of the road, or sent out rich and splendid trains of knights to one crusade after another. Yet they did all these things before they sank from power and disappeared and were lost in the turmoil of South Italian history.

Next greater in strength to survive came Pisa, a contrast to Amalfi in almost every condition, and a power which, when at its height, was of more importance in history because history was then less chaotic. Not backed against steep mountains like Amalfi and

Genoa, but built in the rich alluvial soil of the delta of the Arno, where the widening stream afforded a safe harbour for ships; not isolated in a natural fortress of rocks, but easy of access by land as well as by sea, and therefore easy to quarrel with and often in danger, Pisa possessed the natural advantages of a modern capital like London or Paris rather than the natural defences of a strong city of the Middle Ages. But the times were not ripe, and Florence was too near, jealous, turbulent, commercial and usurious, a dangerous enemy in war, and a terrible competitor in peace. No country has produced simultaneously so many cities as Italy, any of which might have become the capital of a nation. I can only compare the tremendous vigour of her growth at many points at once to that of a strong oak-tree broken off near the ground by a tornado, and sending up shoots from the stump, so tall, so straight, so vital that each one, if the others were cut away, would grow in a few years to be a tree as tall and robust as the parent. Venice, Palermo, Naples, Pisa, Genoa, Florence, Milan—might not any one of these have grown to be a nation's capital? And can any other nation of Europe show as much?

The tenth century was not far advanced when Pisa possessed an immense fleet and was already governing herself as a republic. A proof of her importance lies in the fact that when Otho the Second was at war with the South, and meditated annexing to his Empire what remained of the old Greek colonies, he applied to Pisa to lend him ships wherewith to transport his troops to

Calabria. His sudden death, however, put an end to the negotiations, and the seven nobles whom he had



THE POST OFFICE

sent to Pisa to represent him were so much delighted with all they saw, as well as with their reception, that they asked to be made citizens themselves, were granted

the privilege, and became the founders of that great Ghibelline party by which the destinies of the Pisan Republic were guided so long as she maintained her independence.

Amalfi sent out traders to the East and knights to fight for the Holy Sepulchre; but her knights did not fight to win land for her, nor did her traders ever become colonists. Pisa, like Venice, sought to extend her territory. At that time the daring Saracen chief named Mousa—Moses—settled himself on the eastern and southern coast of Sardinia, and carried his depredations far and wide on the Italian shore and through the Tuscan archipelago. Seizing his opportunity when the Pisan fleet had sailed southwards to help the Calabrian Greeks against the Saracens of Sicily, Mousa and his pirates entered the mouth of the Arno by night and landed in the suburbs of Pisa. The terrified citizens were waked by the yells of their assailants amidst the flames of their own dwellings, and if the corsairs had possessed any local knowledge of the city its history might have gone no further than that night. But in their ignorance they had landed on the wrong bank of the river, and had fired the suburb instead of the city itself; a woman, and some say that she was a noble lady, made her way through the confusion across the bridge to the Consul's dwelling, the church bells were rung backwards and roused the sleeping garrison to arms, and the Saracens, surprised by the prospect of energetic resistance, withdrew hastily to their ships and dropped down the river. The peril was past.

But when the fleet came back from the South vengeance was sworn upon Mousa and his pirates, and the conquest of Sardinia was a foregone conclusion. So Pisa rose to power, and Genoa envied her and Florence too, and those long wars began which ended in her destruction and her absorption. While Venice had been distracted by internal factions, by the feuds of Candiano and Orseolo, Morosini and Caloprini, the 'Dupes and the Flatterers,' Pisa had at least enjoyed the honour of fighting and vanquishing a horde of unbelievers. And meanwhile Genoa had risen also to much the same degree of prosperity and strength, so that when Peter the Hermit's cry rang through the Christian world, rousing the faithful to win back the Holy Land, the four great Italian maritime republics were almost equals in wealth and influence, and in the fleets of which they could dispose.

In what is by no means to be considered a complete history of Venice, my readers will be grateful if I spare them the too untrustworthy details with which the chroniclers fill up their accounts of the eleventh century. In addition to what I have said about the growth of the rival republics, however, it may be mentioned that before the great movement of the first crusade, the Venetians had more than once measured themselves with the Normans in the Levant, and perfectly well understood the position of affairs in the south of Italy and Sicily, where the sons of Tancred of Hauteville had carried everything before them.

Venice, Genoa, and Pisa played almost equal parts in the general European movement that followed, and the Venetians need not be greatly blamed if they derived profit from a source that should have yielded only honour to those who sought it. The Venetians



OFF THE PUBLIC GARDENS

combined glory with business, it is true, but, on the other hand, no one expected them to transport men and horses to the East for nothing; and, since they were the best provided with vessels suitable for that purpose, it was a foregone conclusion that a large part of the transportation should be done by them. Moreover, when all is told, there were few indeed amongst

all those hundreds of thousands who wore the cross who had the right to reproach their fellows and companions for hoping to combine the salvation of their souls with some improvement in their earthly fortunes.

It was, of course, natural that the Italians, who are the least sentimental people in Europe, should understand the worldly advantages which were sure to follow in the wake of that great tidal wave of sentiment which rose from the depths of Europe at Peter the Hermit's cry, advanced, tremendous and irresistible, over land and sea to the most eastern limits of Christian civilisation, to topple and break at last upon Jerusalem itself in a thunderous chaos of disaster and success.

The confused history of the wars in which Venice was engaged during the twelfth century is intimately connected with that of the first and second crusades, though it cannot be said that the Venetians played a very great part in either as fighting crusaders. It is hard to follow exactly what took place when the whole world that surrounded the Mediterranean was in a state of ferment and wild confusion ; but it cannot be denied that the Venetians made the most of the new opportunities presented to them, and they never neglected a chance of enriching themselves at a time when a vast amount of money was brought into circulation to pay for the transportation and victualling of armed hosts. The Republic, even at the outset, was in possession of a fleet that elicited the admiration of Europe. No other

nation owned ships of such varied types well suited to different purposes. They had vessels called 'hippogogi,' intended, as the name indicates, for the transportation of horses, of which each was able to carry a considerable number. They had fast vessels called also by a Greek name, 'dromi,' some of which are stated to have been a hundred and seventy-five feet over all; and though of light draught, such ships can hardly have been of less than three hundred tons register and over. They had a main deck and an upper deck, which the chronicler, who was totally ignorant of nautical matters, presumes to have been assigned respectively to the fighting men and the seamen who worked the ship. Several of these vessels carried timber, so fitted as to be rapidly built up into a turret, reaching to the battlements of sea-girt fortresses and towns, and they were provided with engines for throwing stones, heavy wooden bolts with iron heads, and boiling pitch.

It was undoubtedly at this time that the great rivalry rose between Venice and Genoa, when both were supposed to be helping the Christian cause in the East. It happened more than once that a convenient pretext for these quarrels presented itself in the shape of sacred relics of saints, coveted alike by Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians; and to obtain such precious spoil they slew each other without hesitation or remorse. They not only trusted that the saint, when bodily in their possession, would bestow his richest blessings upon those who had fought for him, but they were also well aware that

his shrine would without doubt attract numerous pilgrims to their city, and thereby prove a permanent source of gain. It was in this way that the Venetians succeeded in carrying off from the island of Rhodes the body of Saint Nicolas, in order to exhibit it to the veneration of the faithful in the church they had already built to him on the Lido; not many years passed before they succeeded in stealing from Constantinople the body of Saint Stephen the martyr, and in the course of the century they possessed themselves of numerous treasures of the same kind.

1099. Defeat of the Pisans off Rhodes, A. Vicentino; ceiling of Sala dello Scrutinio, Ducal Palace.

It must not be supposed, however, that they confined themselves to the discovery and seizure of such pious plunder. The end they pursued was of a more practical nature, and the whole result of their activity during their first wars in the East is found in the establishment of flourishing colonies throughout the Levant, and in the gradual, but in the end surprising subjection of the Byzantine Empire to their commercial interests. They made enormous sacrifices, they shed blood like water and spent money without stint, in order to establish themselves as the masters of the Ionian islands.

Though they hardly fought at all as crusaders, they derived immense advantages from the conquest of the Holy Land. In the kingdom of Jerusalem they acquired the right to own a street, a square, a bakery, and a public bath in every city; in the cities of Sidon and Acre, the ancient Ptolemais, they

Rom. ii. 42.

obtained even more ample privileges; finally, in the year 1123, they had made themselves masters of one-third of the city of Tyre, while leaving the other two-thirds in the possession of the king. They immediately established there an ambassador to represent the Republic, with the title of Bailo, and a consul to protect their financial interests.

1123. Defeat of the Turks at Jaffa, Sante Peranda; same ceiling.

The taking of Tyre was largely due to the personal courage and firmness of the Doge Domenico Michiel. Under apparently hopeless conditions, and when his troops were thoroughly discouraged, without money to pay their wages or supplies to feed them, he succeeded in maintaining his influence over them, and ultimately led them to victory. One of the most extraordinary devices to which he had recourse in the absence of coin was the creation of a leather currency. He actually had vast quantities of leather cut into tokens and stamped with a sign that promised redemption, if they were presented to the treasury in Venice when the expedition reached home; and these tokens circulated as notes do nowadays, and were ultimately redeemed in gold. It is to this circumstance that the arms of the Michiel family make allusion, displaying one-and-twenty pieces of money upon alternate bends, azure and argent.

1123. Fall of Tyre, Aliense; same ceiling.

The influence which the Venetians acquired in Constantinople during the first half of the twelfth century showed itself in the construction of churches and con-

vents in the city itself, and in the establishment of great commercial storehouses and markets, where they used their own Venetian weights, measures, and money, as if they were in Venice itself. Their wares paid no duty on entering the Greek Empire; they required the Greeks to speak of the Doge under the title of Protospartos, or august prince, and the patriarch of Venice was designated as 'Hypertimos,' and derived considerable fees from the Eastern capital, while the basilica of Saint Mark enjoyed a tribute from the Byzantine Empire. In fact, during a certain length of time, the importance of the Republic was almost as great in Constantinople as in Venice itself, and was a source of considerable anxiety to the emperors. They did their best to oppose the growing power of the Venetians, but the assistance of the latter was absolutely necessary to them in order to repulse the attacks of the Normans of Sicily, who even succeeded in penetrating into the suburbs of Constantinople; and for some time the Greeks were obliged to bear with the official pretensions of the Republic, as well as with the insults and humiliations suffered by the Greek soldiers at the hands of their foreign allies.

Rom. ii. 61.

Rom. ii. 49, 61.

1148. Defeat of Roger, Marco Vecellio; same ceiling.

Under the reign of the Emperor Manuel, however, the affairs of the Republic in the East suffered a severe check. During an expedition, of which the real object was nothing less than the conquest of Greece, an outbreak of the plague brought terror and confusion upon the Venetian fleet. The

Rom. ii. 82-87.

attacking force consisted largely of volunteers, who lost heart as the terrible sickness spread amongst



THE CLOCK TOWER

them. A mere remnant of what had seemed a brilliant army reached Venice with the remains of the fleet, and the arrival of these few spread mourn-

ing and desolation amongst the citizens. Outraged at the weakness and lack of wisdom displayed by the Doge during the expedition, the people united to wreak their vengeance upon him, and he was promptly assassinated. Amongst the many families whose youngest and bravest were victims of this fruitless expedition, none was more nearly exterminated than the Giustiniani. One hundred men of their name and race had sailed away to Greece; not one came back. The Venetians felt that the city itself was bereaved by their loss. One man of marriageable age alone survived in Venice to stand between the name of Giustiniani and its extinction, and he was a monk in the monastery of Saint Nicolas. Thither the people proceeded in a body, they claimed him from the order, they brought him home to his ancestral palace, they besought the Pope to free him from his vows. Alexander III. readily acceded to a request so unanimous; at the same time, as if to provide him with a wife whose position should be somewhat similar to his own, the pontiff liberated also from her nunnery the daughter of the former Doge, Vital Michiel II. The former monk and the former nun were united in bonds of matrimony, and became the parents of no less than twelve children, nine of whom were sons. When the twelve were all grown up, Giustiniani founded in the island of Amiano a convent, to which his wife and their three daughters retired, while he returned to his monastery of Saint Nicolas on the Lido.

Rom. ii. 89.

Lazzarini, Guida, 270.

Mol. Dogaressa, 75.

The immediate result of the disastrous expedition to Greece seems to have been that Venice momentarily lost her hold upon the Levant, and was obliged to retire from the strong commercial position she had acquired in Constantinople; but an alliance with William, the king of Sicily and the son of Roger, soon turned the scale in favour of the Republic. The Emperor Manuel Comnenos, terrified at the thought of a coalition between Sicily and Venice, paid the latter a large sum of money by way of indemnity.

Rom. ii. 118.

Such, on the whole, were the principal events in the foreign history of Venice, which were more or less connected with the First Crusade and its consequences. But it must not be supposed that while Venice was doing everything in her power to extend her commerce and influence in eastern Europe and in Asia, she was neglecting to improve her opportunities in Italy. As early as 1101 the Venetians had installed themselves as masters in the city of Ferrara, which they had helped the great Countess Matilda to recover from her imperial enemy. At the same time the Republic required all its prodigious energy to maintain its hold upon Dalmatia, the possession of which was contested by the king of Hungary. One of the numerous expeditions to the Dalmatian coasts cost the life of the Doge Ordelafo Falier; this was in 1116, and fifty years elapsed before the Republic recovered possession of all the fortresses on that coast. Stephen III. of Hungary now thought only of winning the good graces of his country's former rivals, and married two princesses of his family, the

one to Niccolò, a son of the Doge Michiel, who had been created Count of the island of Arbo in Dalmatia, and the other to the Count of Ossero. Venice had become a European power, and foreign sovereigns sought alliance with her by marriage.

Rom. ii. 77.

Much interest attaches to the relations between the Doges, the Emperors, and the Popes in the twelfth century, more especially as the long quarrel ended in the institution of the memorable feast of the Ascension, which was kept in Venice to the very last year of the Republic.

The Emperor Conrad died in the year 1152, leaving an only son who was a mere boy. The electors of the Empire, judging that the times required a strong hand and a sovereign who should not be under the control of any regency, elected the late Emperor's nephew, Frederick of Hohenstaufen, surnamed Barbarossa. Brave, ambitious, and energetic, Frederick's object from the first was to bring all Italy under the direct rule of the Empire. By a piece of good fortune which rarely befell any of the Emperors, he found himself supported by the Pope, who, according to the amiable traditions of those times, should have been his natural enemy. Nicholas Brakespeare, the Englishman who reigned under the name of Pope Hadrian IV., was at that time in considerable anxiety owing to the progress made in Rome by the revolutionary teachings of Arnold of Brescia, and viewed with satisfaction the Emperor's intention of descending into Italy at the head of an imposing army. For such an expedition

a pretext was soon found. Frederick convoked a general diet of the Empire at Roncaglia, not far from Piacenza, which had generally been the official residence of his predecessors when they visited the peninsula.

The Venetian Republic does not appear to have been at all alarmed by what was known of the Emperor's intentions, and sent three patricians to represent her at the diet. The Emperor was indeed chiefly opposed by the Lombards, who entirely refused to acknowledge the claims he now made, and he was accordingly obliged more than once to resort to arms to enforce them, even after his coronation in Rome.

A dangerous epidemic which broke out in Italy obliged him to return to Germany for a short time, but he soon came back and convoked a second diet at Roncaglia, the prime object of which was to define exactly what the situation of the Italian states ought to be with regard to the Empire. The Diet fully supported the Emperor in the claims he made upon Lombardy, and that province, having been placed under the ban of the Imperial Diet, broke out in open revolt. In the war which followed immediately a number of the Lombard cities were besieged, including Milan and Crema. When the latter place was starved to a surrender, and was obliged to open its gates to the Germans, it is recorded that the whole population emigrated in a body, preferring exile to submission.

Rom. ii. 73.

At this time Hadrian IV., Frederick's friend and ally, died, and the conclave elected as his successor Cardinal Bandinelli, who assumed the name of Alexander III.,

and became one of the Emperor's bitterest enemies. Even before his election this Pope had been well known for his strong Guelph sympathies, and his election was a source of profound displeasure to the Emperor. The latter could not easily accomplish his purpose in Italy during the reign of a Pope whose patriotic object it was to liberate his country from all foreign influence. Following the astonishing custom which prevailed in those times, Barbarossa immediately proclaimed a Pope of his own, known to us as the Antipope Victor IV., who united the suffrages and enjoyed the support of that very numerous party which desired to see the Germanic influence of the Empire prevalent south of the Alps.

There was therefore throughout Italy a condition of schism in which the Pope and the patriotic party were opposed to the Antipope and the Imperialists. The Venetians with their patriarch did not hesitate to espouse the cause of Alexander III. At that time the patriarch was still the Bishop of Grado, and as it chanced that he was at odds with the Archbishop of Aquileia about certain questions connected with the Dalmatian bishoprics since that province had passed into the hands of the Venetians, Aquileia very naturally joined the Imperial standard, and proceeded to sack the diocese of the rival bishop. The Doge interfered in person, and with the help of a few faithful troops succeeded in capturing the hot-headed Bishop of Aquileia, a dozen of his canons, and a number of Friulese country gentlemen who had joined the quarrel

Rom. ii. 75.

in the hope of plunder. These prisoners were all brought to Venice, but were set at liberty when the bishop and his canons had signed a treaty or perpetual agreement, whereby they bound themselves and their successors for ever to pay a yearly tribute consisting of twelve loaves of white bread and twelve fat pigs. The Republic judged that the memory of this victory of the rightful Pope's party over his adversaries should be preserved, and as a means of doing so decreed that the aforesaid fattened swine should be handed over to the populace on the Thursday before Lent to be hunted to death in the piazza of Saint Mark. This carnival diversion was so highly appreciated by the people that when in the year 1420 the Pope abolished the two patriarchates of Grado and Aquileia, and created instead the patriarchate of Venice, the Government was obliged to provide the pigs at its own expense.

It is only fair to say here that the patriarch of Aquileia made act of submission to Pope Alexander III. himself.

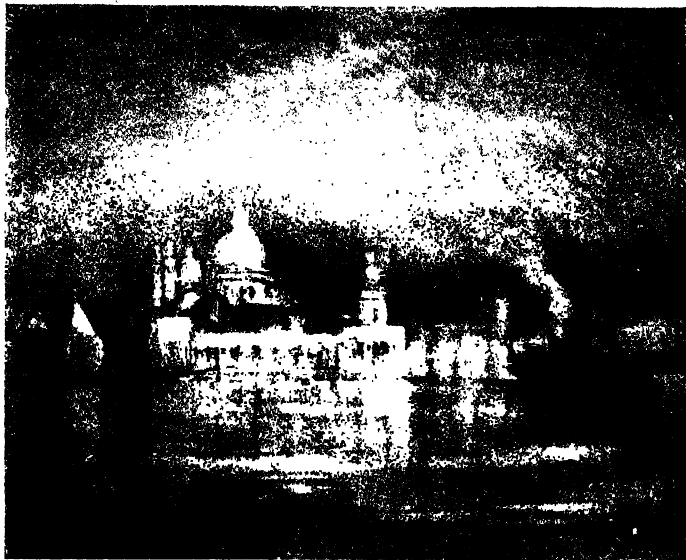
Meanwhile, in the year 1162, that Pope was forced to take refuge in France to escape from the dangers that beset him in Rome; and the bishops and cardinals who were faithful to him, and who now found themselves fugitives, received a hospitable welcome with promises of protection in Venice. It was but natural that this should irritate the Emperor, and foreseeing that there was to be trouble the Republic hastened to conclude alliances with the Greek Emperor and the king of Naples, whose interest it was to check the growth of German influence in Italy.

On his side Barbarossa assured himself of the support of Genoa, and returned to Germany to raise fresh troops, while Alexander III. took advantage of his enemy's absence to come back to Rome. It was in the midst of these party struggles that the Lombard League first took shape and began to grow; in 1167 a congress was held at which were present deputies from the cities of Venice, Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, Ferrara, Brescia, Bergamo, Mantua, Cremona, Milan, Lodi, Parma, Modena, Bologna, Novara, Vercelli, Reggio, Asti and Tortona. The representatives of these powerful towns met together and swore a solemn oath in a great fortress which they had built for the common defence, and around which a city had already sprung up. The city and fortress were named Alessandria, in honour of Pope Alexander III., who was the soul of the patriotic Italian 'Concordia.' It is worth noting that the city of Piacenza, which up to this time had been considered the central focus of Germanic influence in Italy, sent representatives to the congress of Alessandria, and afterwards took an active part in the alliance which was formed there.

Rom. ii. 81.

The Emperor spared no effort to obtain possession of the stronghold of the League; but while the garrison opposed the most determined resistance from within, the cities of the League harassed the Germans from without, and forced them to raise the siege within four months. Not very much later, though too late, the Imperial army received considerable reinforcements; but during

that time the army of the League had been able to make every preparation for a decisive battle. The armies met at Legnano on May 19, 1176, *Rom. ii. 100.* and the encounter resulted in a disastrous defeat for Frederick. He himself was thrown from his horse, the



THE DOGANA AND THE SALUTE

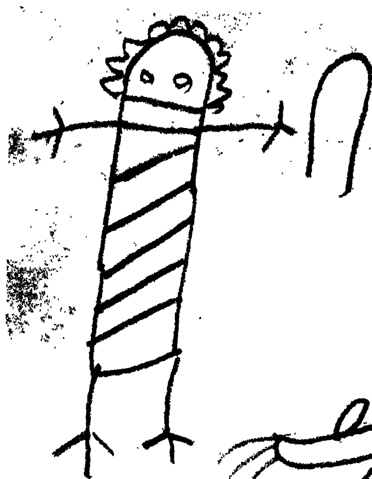
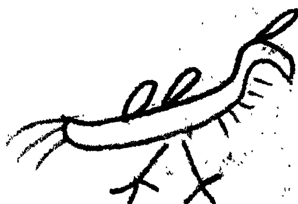
great standard of the Empire was captured, and the Imperialists were driven to ignominious flight. The Venetians had no troops in this battle, which was fought at a considerable distance from their territory, but they had contributed large sums of money as well as munitions of war to the cause.

During the six years which had preceded this de-

cisive battle Alexander III. had led a life of hardship and danger. Beset and pursued by his enemies, he wandered and sometimes fled from Benevento to Veroli, and thence to Anagni, feeling himself safer anywhere than in Rome, where party feeling ran high and took the side of Frederick. But the latter's signal defeat at Legnano convinced Barbarossa at last that his true interest lay in making peace with the sovereign pontiff, in spite of the great difficulty which must attend any negotiations towards such an end; for Frederick dreamt of nothing less than reconciling himself with Alexander III. without abandoning the Antipope whom he had set up in opposition. The first point agreed upon was that a meeting should take place in some city of northern Italy, and that the Pope should attend it in person.

1177. Departure of the Doge's ambassadors and Papal legates for Pavia, school of Paolo Veronese; arrival of the envoys before Barbarossa, Tintoretto; Hall of the Great Council.

As a preliminary step the Pope proceeded to Venice, being conveyed thither by the galleys of the king of Sicily, and visiting on his way the principal cities of Dalmatia. He was received in Venice with the most profound respect and with demonstrations of the greatest joy by the Doge, the clergy, and the people. During his stay in the city there was a constant exchange of messages between him and the Emperor regarding the city to be chosen for a congress to discuss the peace. Then the Pope himself was obliged to travel to Ferrara, a town which the cities of the League would have preferred, though it was too small to lodge the great




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number of persons who would have to be present. The Pope returned to Venice after discussing the question with the envoys of Milan, and called together the ambassadors of the Empire, the legates of Sicily, and the principal Lombard chiefs. All these personages presented themselves in answer to the pontifical summons, and proceeded to discuss the situation at great length. The result of the congress was that the Emperor agreed to recognise the legitimate election of Alexander III., to renounce his own Antipope, to sign a truce of six years with the Lombard League, and of fifteen years with the king of Sicily.

These preliminaries having been properly and minutely established, the Emperor was invited to meet the Pope in Venice. It was his Canossa. He arrived in Chioggia in 1177, and was met at the entrance of the lagoons by a deputation of bishops, who exhorted him to abjure his schism before entering upon Venetian territory. Barbarossa complied with good grace and was forthwith freed from the ban of excommunication. On the following day he proceeded to the capital. The Doge, the patriarch of Grado, and all the bishops of the Venetian State went out to meet him in their barges. The whole company landed at the Piazzetta amidst the acclamations of the crowd, and the Emperor was at once conducted to the Basilica. Here the Pope, in full pontificals, awaited him under the porch, surrounded by his cardinals and numerous representatives of the Venetian clergy. When he saw before him the august pontiff whom he had so long and so cruelly persecuted, the

Barbarossa kneeling before Alexander III., Federigo Zuccaro; Hall of the Great Council.

Emperor seems to have felt a sudden impulse of penitence, for he threw himself upon h knees and bowed down to kiss the Pop feet ; but Alexander would not allow to go so far, and raising him to his feet stowed upon him the kiss of peace. Side by side the temporal and the spiritual sovereigns of the world went up the ancient aisle together to the steps of the high altar, and with the clergy and people intoned the 'Te Deum Laudamus.'

On the first of August of that year the truce with the Lombard League was signed, and at the same time the Venetians obtained for themselves certain especial promises from the Emperor, one of which was that no imperial ships should navigate the waters of the Adriatic Gulf, which Venice now looked upon as her exclusive property, without the consent of the Republic. On his side the Pope accorded numerous privileges to the city which had given him such abundant proof of its fidelity.

A great part of the importance which was attached to the Doge's annual visit to the Lido on Ascension Day had its origin in the fact that Alexander III. was present in Venice at that feast. It is true that the custom of the visit dated from the days of Pietro Orseolo II., but the ceremony of espousing the sea was first performed in 1177, when the Pope, on presenting the Doge Sebastian Ziani with a magnificent ring, accompanied the gift with the words : 'Take this as a token of the sovereignty which you and your

successors shall exercise over this sea for ever.' In memory of this speech the Doge afterwards dropped a



CHIOGGIA

golden wedding-ring into the sea every year with imposing ceremonies.

These are the simple facts upon which is founded

the amazing legend of Alexander's arrival in Venice. Tracked and pursued, the story says, by his imperial enemies, the fugitive Pope reached Venice in disguise and at night. After wandering for hours through the dark and winding ways of the city, he sank down at last upon the steps of a church, worn out with fatigue and sleep, to wait for the day. At dawn he took up his staff again, and on seeing a building which was evidently a monastery, he knocked at the door and asked for shelter. The house was that of Santa Maria della Carità. He was admitted, and, according to at least one chronicler, was installed in the kitchen as a scullion. In this humble office he lived uncomplaining for six months, until a French traveller, who had often seen him in France, recognised him, and hastened to inform the Doge of his presence. The emotion created by the intelligence may easily be imagined. The ducal palace and the whole city were in a ferment of excitement, and a vast procession proceeded at once to fetch the sovereign pontiff from the convent kitchen and conduct him to the palace of the patriarch of Grado. Strong in the support of the Venetians, the Pope now sent ambassadors to Frederick requiring him to restore peace to Church and State. The Emperor, according to the story, sent an arrogant reply, and swore that he would plant his victorious standard before the very door of Saint Mark's. The natural result of such a reply could only be a war, and the legend did not fail to invent one of the most dramatic nature. Sixty

Alexander III. recognised in the monastery of the Carità, school of P. Veronese; Hall of the Great Council.

galleys from the Empire, from Genoa and from Pisa, entered the Adriatic under the command of the young Otho, the Emperor's son, a boy of eighteen years, endowed with superhuman strength, courage, and experience. Against this powerful fleet the Venetians could only send a force of thirty ships. But right was on their side, and especially the right of legend to give the victory to its favourites. The Doge knelt before the Pope, the Pope blessed him, presented him with a golden sword and promised him the victory.

Alexander III. presents the Doge with the sword, Francesco Bassano; same Hall.

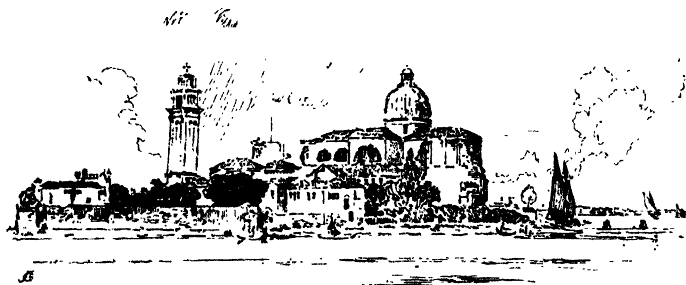
On Ascension Day a great and bloody sea-fight was fought off Salvore, not far from Parenzo, and the Venetians utterly discomfited their enemies, taking from them forty-eight galleys and a vast number of prisoners, including the Prince Otho himself. Like all legendary people, these legendary Venetians were noble and generous beyond words, and at once sent the Prince back to his father with twelve ambassadors. Touched by so much kindness, the Emperor requested a safe-conduct for himself to visit Venice, and having arrived there he was kept waiting an unconscionable time while the terms of a treaty of peace were drawn up. When he was at last admitted to the presence of Alexander III. Frederick was made to lay aside all the insignia of royalty, and was forced to lie down flat upon his face while the Pope placed one foot upon the back of his neck and recited from Psalm xci. verse 13, 'The young

Battle of Salvore, Domenico Tintoretto; same Hall.

The Venetians present Prince Otho to the Pope, A. Vicentino; and other pictures representing scenes from the same legend, in the same Hall.

lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.' Frederick answered, 'I bow not before thee, but before Peter.' 'Both before Peter and before me,' insisted the Pope.

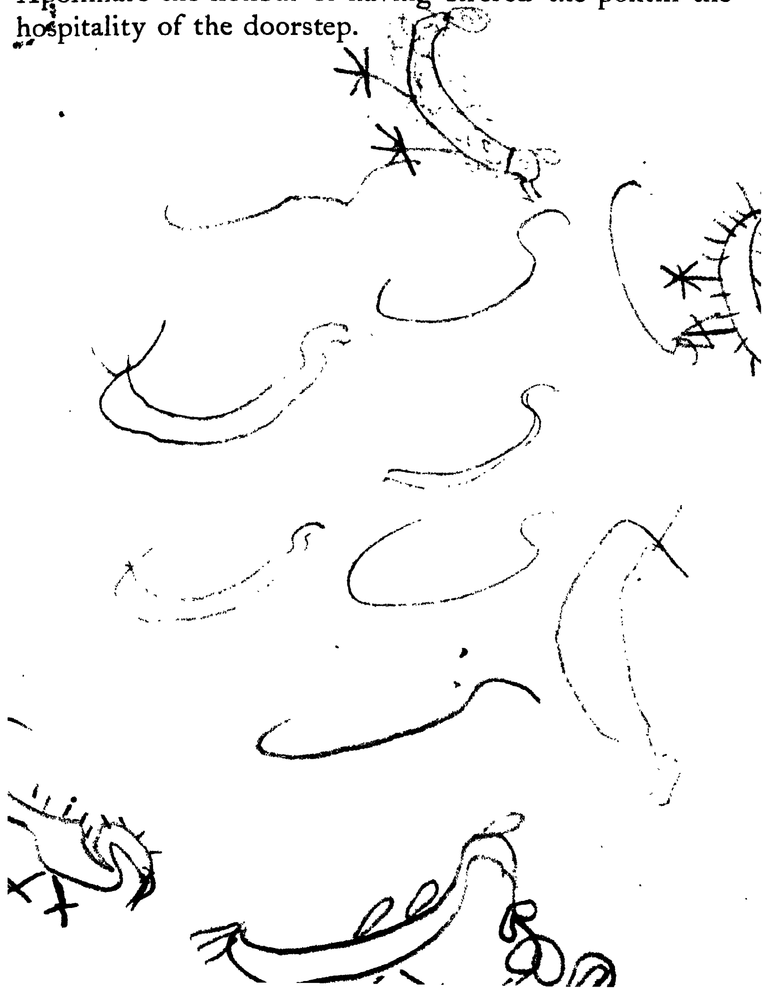
The historian Romanin is justified in declaring that it would be hard to accumulate a greater number of absurdities in a single tale, and the most elementary historical criticism has sufficed to destroy all such fables.



S. PIETRO IN CASTELLO

They are, indeed, so manifestly imaginary that the so-called proofs of the dramatic events they describe have been allowed to remain untouched, and they exist to the present day. They consist of an inscription cut in marble, which recalls to the inhabitants of Salvore the victory of the Doge Sebastian Ziani over the fleet of Otho of Hohenstaufen ; of an inscription on the outside of the church of Sant' Apollinare informing the public that Pope Alexander III. passed a bad night on the

steps of that church; and of similar inscriptions upon the churches of Santa Sofia, San Salvatore, San Giacomo, and some other churches, which dispute with Sant' Apollinare the honour of having offered the pontiff the hospitality of the doorstep.





PONTE MALCANTONE

VI

VENICE AND CONSTANTINOPLE

THE most conflicting judgments have been formed upon the action of the Venetian Republic at the decisive moments of her career, as well as upon the true sources of her wealth and importance. One writer, for instance, gravely tells us that Venice, like England, grew rich by usury and the slave trade; another, whose good faith cannot be doubted, assures the world that the two great mistakes which led to the final downfall

of the Republic were the 'Serrata del Gran Consiglio,' which excluded the people from the government, and the unjustifiable sack and seizure of Constantinople. It would be hard indeed to produce any satisfactory proof of the former statement; for though the Venetians undoubtedly supplied themselves and one part of Italy with white slaves from the East, and although the Republic at times lent money at interest to poorer Governments in distress, yet I do not think that these sources of income were ever to be compared with that derived from a great and legitimate commerce, and from less justifiable but not less lucrative conquest.

As for the second statement, it is enough to consider the length of time which elapsed between the taking of Constantinople and the closure of the Great Council about a hundred years later, say in 1300, on the one hand, and the final destruction of Venetian independence in 1797 on the other. When, in history, an effect is separated from its supposed cause by an interval of five hundred years or more, I do not hesitate to assert that the connection is a little more than doubtful. As for the exclusion of the people from the government having been a source of danger to the Republic, it is interesting to note that almost in the same year the Republic of Florence adopted precisely the opposite course, that it led directly to internal discord and the wars of the Blacks and Whites, and that in less than two hundred years the city which had adopted the democratic view was under the dominion of tyrants —a striking instance of the truth of some of the

most important conclusions reached by Plato in the *Republic*.

In the year 1198 Pope Innocent III. called upon Christendom to undertake a fourth crusade, and the voice of Fulk of Neuilly preached the delivery of the Holy Sepulchre, and roused to arms the most valiant barons and gentlemen of France.

It was not till 1201 that the new army of crusaders was sufficiently organised to consider the means of reaching Palestine, and they then decided that they must make the journey by sea. Accordingly they sent an embassy to Venice, the only maritime power then able to furnish the ships and transports required.

Enrico Dandolo, the Doge, entertained their request, and, speaking in the name of the Republic, offered to convey to Palestine four thousand five hundred horses and nine thousand squires and grooms on large transports, and to take four thousand five hundred knights and twenty thousand men-at-arms on other vessels, and to furnish provisions for men and horses for nine months; and, further, to send fifty armed galleys to convoy the transports to 'the shores whither Christianity and the service of God called them.'

For this transportation the Republic required the payment of 85,000 marks of silver before the army embarked, and the promise of an equal division of all conquests and of all spoil, Venice to receive one-half of everything.

To these terms the ambassadors agreed, and they obtained from the Pope a solemn approval of the

agreement, which the Republic fulfilled with great exactness, but which many of the crusaders violated in a manner far from honourable; for a large number, deeming that they could make the journey more cheaply on their own account, embarked from other European ports without any regard to the engagements made in their names by the ambassadors they themselves had chosen.

The consequence was that at the time agreed upon for meeting in Venice, the crusaders found their numbers much inferior to those provided for in the contract; and, as was natural, those who presented themselves were not able to produce the sum of money agreed upon for the whole number.

But, according to the agreement signed, if the whole sum was not paid before embarking, whatever was paid in was forfeited to the Republic, which had been put to great expense and trouble in fitting out so large a fleet.

In this extremity Enrico Dandolo pointed out to his countrymen that Venice should play a generous part, rather than exact the letter of the contract; that a compromise should be made on some sound basis; and that the most obvious way of settling the matter was to ask of the crusaders some service, during the voyage to Palestine, which should be accepted instead of the balance of the money still unpaid, amounting to no less than 30,000 marks of silver (about £60,000 sterling). To this proposal the crusaders agreed, though not without considerable opposition on the part of some of their number.

Let it be observed here, in defence of what the Venetians afterwards did, that they were connected with the Fourth Crusade in two totally distinct characters. In the first place, they themselves took the cross in great numbers, and were therefore crusaders in the true sense; secondly, they were a company for the transportation of a great number of other crusaders at stated rates, under a guarantee. Moreover, they did not, as some have supposed, include their own forces amongst those for whom the French were to pay.

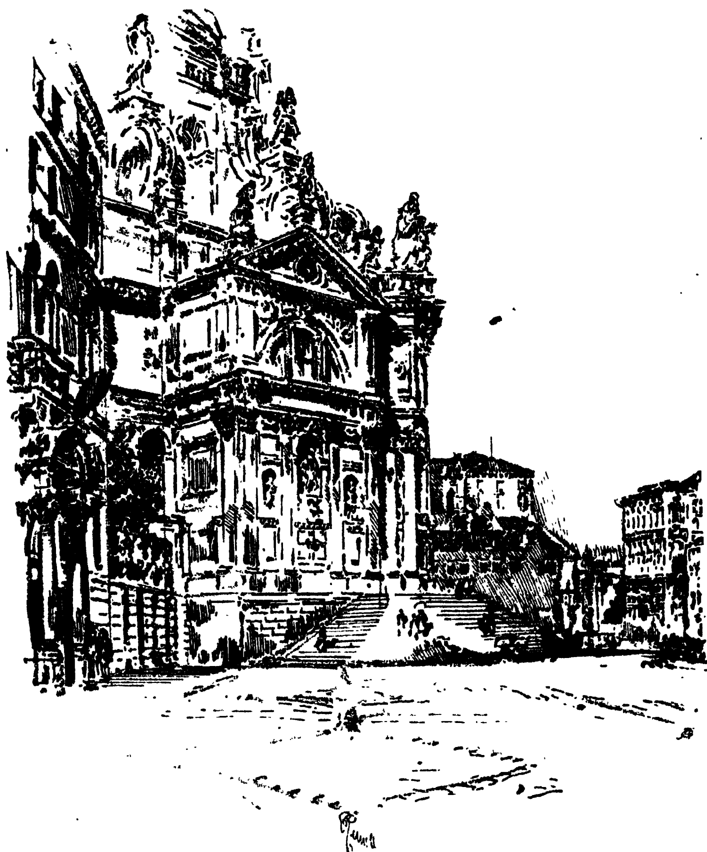
According to Sismondi, the estimate they made for the transportation of the French was as follows :—

For	4,500 horses, at 4 marks of silver each .	18,000 marks
„	4,500 knights, at 2 marks of silver each .	9,000 „
„	9,000 squires and grooms, at 2 marks of silver each	18,000 „
„	20,000 men-at-arms, at 2 marks of silver each	40,000 „
	For 4,500 horses and 33,500 men, total .	85,000 marks
	Equal to about	£170,000 sterling.

This represented what may be called the business side of the transaction. As crusaders, the Venetians who accompanied the expedition appeared not as business men but as allies, and provided for themselves in every way; and it was as allies that they claimed an equal share of conquest and spoil.

The weakness of the Pope's subsequent position lay in the fact that while he could, and did, excommunicate the crusaders for going out of their way, he could not

possibly have excommunicated them if the Venetians, as



THE SALUTE

business men, had insisted on the performance of the contract and had refused to start at all.

In giving a brief account of the taking of Constanti-

nople, I shall not offer any criticism of a deed which has been generally condemned, and which it is certainly not easy to excuse, but I shall present it very nearly as it appeared to Romanin, himself a Venetian, and one of the greatest and most just of the Venetian historians.

Rom. ii. 154.

It was on a Sunday, and in the year 1201, that the decision was reached which sent a Venetian fleet and army to the East under the aged Doge Enrico Dandolo. A vast crowd filled the basilica of Saint Mark, and was swelled by the foreign knights and their attendants, who had descended from the ducal palace after being received by the Doge. Moreover, there were many pilgrims in the throng, wearing upon their coats and cloaks the emblem of the cross. High mass was to be celebrated, and the high altar was already prepared for the solemn function. Before it began, however, a very old man of venerable aspect, but still preserving something of his earlier energy, appeared in the pulpit of the cathedral. He was almost sightless—so blind, indeed, that he had to be led when he walked. But, in spite of age and infirmity, Enrico Dandolo was still one of the most remarkable men living in an age which produced many characters of wonderful individuality and strength. Even his blindness was not the consequence of weakness or old age, but of the fiendish cruelty of the Emperor Manuel Comnenos, who had almost destroyed his sight when he had been ambassador in Constantinople nearly a quarter of a century earlier.

1201. Dandolo takes the cross, Giovanni Le Clerc; Hall of the Great Council.

Rom. ii. 97.

He had now reached the age of ninety-four, and had been Doge already eight years.

He stood up in the pulpit and spoke to the people, not long but earnestly, and though he was nearly a hundred years old his voice rang clear and distinct through the vast church, and the words he spoke were heard and long remembered.

'You are allied,' he said, 'with the bravest of living men for the greatest purpose which man can embrace; and I am old and weak and my body has sore need of rest, yet I clearly see that no one can lead you in this enterprise with the authority which is mine as chief of the Republic. I pray you give me leave to take the cross that I may lead you and watch over you, and let my son take my place here to guard the territories of Venice while I go forth to live or die with you and with these pilgrims.'

Rom. ii. 154.

A great cry went up from all the people, 'So be it for God's sake! Take the cross also and come with us.' And therewith a great wave of enthusiasm moved the whole host—strangers, pilgrims, and Venetians alike; and one who stood in the crowd has recorded that there was something in the bearing of the ancient Doge, in his prayer for permission to take the cross, in the sacrifice he offered of the last strength that was in him, that brought tears to the eyes of them that saw and heard.

Then Enrico Dandolo, laying one hand upon the shoulder of him who went before to lead him, came down and knelt before the high altar; and he asked

that the cross should be sewn upon his great cotton bonnet that all might see it, and a great number of Venetians followed his example and took the cross also.

The fleet sailed out of the harbour of Venice on the eighth day of October 1202, a fleet of three hundred sail, the noblest and best equipped that had yet been seen. Three huge vessels led the line—the *Aquila*, the *Paradiso*, and the *Pellegrina*. Above the broad sails the standard of the Republic floated from the masthead, while the flags of other nations that were sending crusaders with the fleet were displayed below it and at the yard-arms. The three hundred vessels were manned by a force of forty thousand men in the bloom of their youth and strength.

The crusade that followed has been too often described for me to describe it. I shall merely endeavour to present a short statement of the main facts and their consequences.

Pope Innocent III. had strictly enjoined upon the crusaders to stop nowhere by the way, but to proceed directly to the Holy Land without turning aside to pursue any purpose or undertaking foreign to the end for which they had bound themselves together by solemn oath. The Pope's command was peremptory; it is hardly necessary to say that it was also prudent, since the first three crusades had shown clearly to what extent the interests of commerce and the desire for gain could thwart the true purpose of the Holy War. Nevertheless the Venetians considered that the Pope's words could be interpreted with a breadth

Rom. ii. 155.

convenient to their own ends, and in spite of the resistance of the French knights, who wished to obey the Pope to the letter, the fleet anchored off the coast of Dalmatia in order to retake the strongholds which had fallen under the domination of Hungary. Enrico Dandolo's argument in favour of this was by no means illogical, whatever his real motives may have been, for he pointed out that it was absolutely necessary to take possession of all harbours on the way to the East from which pirates might sail out to harass the fleet.

No sooner had he taken the city of Zara, however, than the French knights were perplexed and terrified by a message from the Pope, who threatened to excommunicate all who had fought in this incidental war unless they made honourable amends. Ambassadors were at once sent to Rome to explain Dandolo's specious argument to the Pope and humbly to implore the latter's pardon. Innocent granted his absolution readily enough, on condition that the crusaders should not turn aside again on their way to the Holy Land.

1202. Zara attacked by the crusaders, A. Vicentino; Hall of the Great Council.

But meanwhile a still greater temptation presented itself to attract the crusaders out of their straight course. For a long time past the Empire of the East had been distracted by civil wars. At the time when the crusaders set sail from Venice the Emperor Isaac had been dethroned and blinded by his brother Alexis, who had seized the power. But Isaac's son, the younger Alexis, had succeeded in eluding his uncle's vigilance, and had escaped from Con-

Rom. ii. 160-1.

stantinople. He had visited Rome with the intention of obtaining assistance from Pope Innocent III., but only to find that his purpose had been forestalled by his uncle, the reigning Emperor. The latter, fearing the Pope's interference, had already sent an embassy to him with instructions to beguile him with promises of a reconciliation between the Greek and Latin Churches. As this reconciliation, or submission, was the principal inducement which the younger Alexis had to offer in return for help, the Pope considered that it would be wiser to treat with the uncle, who was in possession, rather than with the nephew who was a fugitive. Deceived in his hopes, the younger Alexis proceeded to Germany, to the court of King Philip of Swabia, who had set himself up as Emperor against Otho IV., and had married a sister of the young Prince. It is not clear whether it was Philip himself who suggested to Alexis the possibility of attracting the crusaders to Constantinople, but he appears to have recommended the plan and to have strongly urged the Venetians to agree to it. At all events Alexis now proceeded to Zara and soon interested the aged Dandolo in his cause. He made great promises if the crusaders would help him to get back the throne; he would bear the whole expenses of the crusade for one year; he would divide amongst the crusaders a sum of two hundred thousand silver marks; he would guarantee for all future time that five hundred knights should be supported by the Greek Empire in the Holy Land to

Quadri, 117.

Alexis Comnenos asks help of the Venetians, A. Vicentino; same Hall.

guard it from the attacks of unbelievers; and finally, he promised to bring the Eastern Church back to the spiritual dominion of the popes. These magnificent offers on the one hand, and the moving picture which, on the other, he drew of his father Isaac's sufferings, produced a profound impression upon his hearers, and especially, perhaps, upon those who had already been in Constantinople and had formed an opinion as to the value of such a prize. In the eyes of the Venetians, too, there was even another object to be accomplished, namely, the destruction of the power of Pisa and of her commerce in the East.

It was in vain that the Pope, who wished to manage matters himself, and who was more than half pledged to the usurper of the throne, raised his voice in threats and protestations; it was in vain that he insisted on the wretched condition of the Christians in Palestine and the extremities to which they were reduced, pointing out that their welfare was to be considered rather than a blind prisoner's claims to the throne from which he had been ousted, no matter how unjustly. Nothing that the Pope could say had the slightest effect upon men whose conscience agreed to an act of justice in which their ruling passion for gain anticipated an opportunity for almost unbounded plunder. Those who feared to displease the Pope, or were terrified by the menace of excommunication, were told that they were free to leave the ranks if they chose. A few French knights took advantage of this alternative and left the army; amongst these was Simon de Montfort.

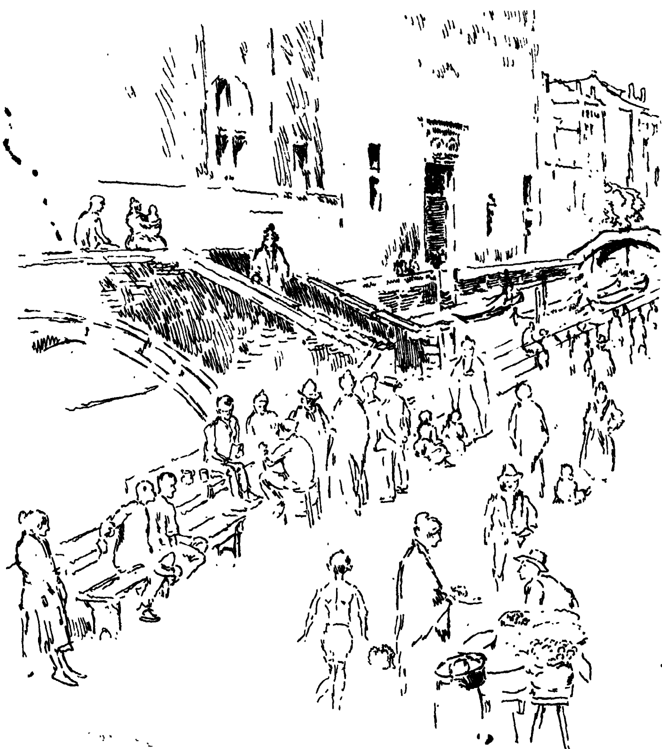
Rom. ii. 162.

But the principal French nobles espoused the cause of the younger Alexis, including Boniface of Montferrat, Baldwin of Flanders, Louis of Blois, and Hugh the Count of Saint Paul. These and the great majority, with their followers, threw in their lot with Enrico Dandolo, and looked on with indifference when the Pope's cardinal legates left the crusade and proceeded to the East by themselves.

Sismondi considers that the subsequent attitude of Venice towards the Holy See throughout her history had its origin at this time; for when, before the expedition sailed, Cardinal San Marcello arrived in Venice, as the Pope's legate, to take command of the crusading fleet, he was informed that if he shipped as a Christian preacher he should be treated with the highest honours, but that if he came with the slightest idea of giving orders he could not be allowed on board; whereupon, having thoroughly understood the situation, he returned to Rome.

As the fleet proceeded eastwards it was very naturally obliged to put in at a number of Greek harbours, not only to obtain provisions, but because it was absolutely necessary to land the crusaders' horses from time to time for exercise; and when we consider the conditions of navigation and the dimensions of vessels in those days, we are surprised that such a body of cavalry could have been successfully transported at all from the Venetian islands to the very walls of Constantinople. It was generally considered at that period that Constantinople shared the dominion of the sea with Venice,

but it appears that the Emperor's brother-in-law, who was high admiral of the fleet, had deliberately sold for



FONDAMENTA S. GIROLAMO

his own advantage the sails, rigging, cables, and even anchors of the ships of war, and that the vessels them-

selves had been allowed to rot in the Bosphorus till even the hulks were unfit for sea. It is easy to understand why the magnificently-equipped fleet of the Venetians could proceed from one imperial harbour to another without meeting even a show of opposition. Moreover, wherever the crusaders went they found the cities they visited well disposed towards the younger Alexis. In this way they touched at Durazzo, Corfu, Cape Malea, Negroponte, Andros and Abydos, and came at last, on the eve of Saint John's day (twenty-third of June), to the town and abbey of San Stefano, famous in many a later war, to our own times, and well within sight of the city. Here, says Geoffrey de Villehardouin, the Marshal of Champagne, and the eyewitness and chronicler of the whole expedition, the masters of the ships, galleys, and transports took harbour and anchored their vessels: 'Now you may know that long they looked upon Constantinople who had never seen it yet, and they could not believe that so rich a city could be in all the world. When they saw those lofty walls and those rich towers which close it in all round about, and those rich palaces and tall churches of which there were so many as no one could have believed if he had not seen them with his eyes, through all the length and breadth of that city, which among all others was sovereign; know ye well that then there was none so brave but that his heart trembled, and this was no wonder, for never was so great a matter undertaken . . . then each looked to his arms, considering that in them soldiers must trust when they shall soon have need of them.'

I shall not attempt to describe the memorable events which followed. Here, as in many passages of his history, it may be said of Gibbon, as of Titian by Taine, that 'he absorbed his forerunners and ruined his successors.' It is enough to say that the city was fortified with double walls and four hundred towers, and that the garrison was estimated by Villehardouin at no less than four hundred thousand men. The resistance was obstinate, but the attack was irresistible. The French, judging at first that they could fight better on land, concentrated their strength against the northern wall; the Venetians, from their ships, scaled the fortifications that rose from the edge of the sea. The aged Dandolo led the general assault himself, twenty-five of the towers were captured, and the fall of Constantinople was a foregone conclusion. But the whole siege, with intermissions, lasted from June until the following April. During that time the deposed and imprisoned Emperor Isaac, surnamed Angelos, succeeded through his friends in organising a revolution in his favour, in regaining the throne, which he divided with his son Alexis, and finally in quarrelling with his liberators, the Venetians and the French crusaders, after considerable demonstrations of friendship, because he could not carry out the clause in the agreement relative to the subjection of the Greek Church to the popes. He, and even his son, the younger Alexis, though not to blame for this, seem to have been very little better than his brother, the elder Alexis, who had fled for safety, and the student

Rom. ii. 170.

Attack on Constantinople, Palma Giovane, Hall of the Great Council.

is not sorry to learn that they were put to death by such patriots as remained in the corrupt capital before the final assault.

The besiegers, on their side, had made a treaty among themselves for the division of the spoil, with the following conditions :—

First, after the taking of Constantinople, a new emperor was to be elected from among the crusaders by a body consisting of six Venetians and six of the French barons.

Rom. ii. 177. *Quadri, 122.*

Secondly, whichever nation should be the one from which the emperor was chosen was to leave to the other the church of Saint Sophia, with the right of designating the Patriarch.

Thirdly, the other churches of the city were to be equally divided between Venice and the French.

Fourthly, all future conquests, including the city itself, were to be so divided that the elected emperor should receive one-quarter of the whole, while the remaining three-quarters were to be divided equally between the French and the Venetians. It was, however, provided that Venice was to receive the balance of the sum due for transporting the crusaders before any division of the spoil took place.

Rom. ii. 182.

The city was finally taken on the twelfth of April 1204, the final assault having lasted three days, but as it was late in the day when the allies got possession of the fortifications they did not venture into the interior of the city until the following morning. It has been estimated that nearly one-half of the city

with all the treasures it contained had been destroyed by the three great fires which had taken place during the preceding months, yet the spoil that remained far exceeded anything recorded in history, and it is not to be denied that both the French and the Venetians committed frightful excesses in the first intoxication of their immense triumph.

1204. Storming of Constantinople, Domenico Tintoretto; Hall of the Great Council.

The articles of the treaty the victors had made among themselves were strictly observed. The spoil was divided in the manner and proportions stipulated, electors were chosen, and they proceeded to the choice of an emperor. It was but natural that the majority should agree at once upon the Doge Enrico Dandolo, to whose judgment, determination, and personal courage the success of an apparently impossible enterprise was largely due. A force of between thirty and forty thousand men, coming in ships from a distant country and facing every possible strategic disadvantage, had destroyed the Eastern Empire in a few months, and had captured the most strongly fortified city in the world against odds of more than ten to one. From first to last they had been counselled, directed, and led by the aged Doge; assuredly no one was more worthy than he to receive the highest reward and the greatest share of honour. One Frenchman and one Venetian, however, dissented, and it was the Venetian who argued convincingly against Dandolo's election. He pointed out clearly that the chief magistrate of a free republic

Election of Baldwin, A. Vicentino; same Hall.

could not in conscience be at the same time the despot of an empire, and he advised that Baldwin of Flanders should be chosen instead. The Venetians themselves were easily persuaded of the justice and good

Dandolo crowns Baldwin, Aliense; same Hall.



VENICE FROM THE LAGOON

sense of this view, and it was forthwith unanimously adopted.

The conquerors proceeded next without delay to the dismemberment of the Empire, dividing amongst themselves provinces and cities of which they barely knew, and could not correctly write the names, and omitting many of the very existence of which they were

in ignorance. Amongst the lands and strongholds which fell to the share of the Venetians may be mentioned Lacedaemon, Durazzo, the Islands of the Cyclades and Sporades, and the Island of Crete, or Candia, taken over in a friendly exchange from the Marquis of Montferrat, and all the eastern coast of the Adriatic. The Doge of Venice added to his titles the one of 'Lord and Master of a quarter and a half-quarter of the Roman Empire,' and in official acts the new Emperor was to address him as 'Carissimus Socius nostri Imperii.' *Quadri, 127.*

This vast and sudden extension of territory, while it at once placed the Republic on an equal footing with the greatest European powers, had many disadvantages, and was fraught with dangers. Venice consisted properly of nothing more than the city and the duchy, with a population which Sismondi estimates at two hundred thousand souls; the partition of the Empire conferred upon Venice, by a stroke of the pen, many thousand square miles of land and seven or eight millions of subjects, and Venice, as the author I am quoting very pithily says, though not able to annex Padua, only twenty miles from the lagoons, was now undertaking to subdue what constituted a powerful kingdom, and to defend it against Turks, Bulgarians, Wallachians, and possibly even against the Latins of Constantinople.

It was clear that though the commerce of the Republic might gain immensely by this extension of her dominions, the responsibility assumed by the Republic was far beyond that which so limited a population could

bear, and that the expenses of administering and defending the distant provinces would be enormous. Nor could the Venetians afford to overlook the fact that their great rivals, Genoa and Pisa, would spare no effort to drive them from their new possessions by fair means or foul. Before the taking of Constantinople the rich citizens either lived at home altogether or returned after each voyage to fit their ships for another; but so soon as the Republic became the possessor of important colonies in the East, it was manifestly necessary that a considerable number of the most experienced and bravest Venetians should remain constantly abroad to administer and defend those new possessions.

Rom. ii. 183.

The position of Venice at this time may be not inaptly compared with that of Rome when, after the annexation of Sicily, she found herself obliged to inaugurate that system of provincial government which she ever afterwards followed. But Venice was not Rome, and even if the Venetians had possessed the qualities of the Romans in addition to their own, they could not have succeeded as the Romans did, since in Genoa and Pisa they had competitors as civilised and as wealthy as themselves and far more numerous. Rome went on and conquered the world; Venice drew back in the face of a manifest impossibility, retiring, with much common sense and not a little dignity, from a career of successful conquest to the less brilliant but more stable condition of a commercial people.

The Venetian Senate after due deliberation gave up all

idea of retaining possession of the new conquests, and in the year 1207 issued an edict authorising all Venetian citizens to fit out at their own expense armed expeditions to seize anything they could in the Greek archipelago or on the Greek coast; the Republic bound itself to leave each individual adventurer the lands or cities he was able to take, as his property in perpetual fee, reserving itself only the right of sovereign protection. It is true that the coast and the islands named in this edict formed a part of Venice's share in the division of the Eastern Empire, yet I doubt whether at any time in the history of nations any government has ventured to issue such a wholesale charter to piracy, and none was ever more literally interpreted.

As for the short-lived Empire of the Latins in Constantinople, it was brought to an end by the family of the Paleologi with the assistance of the Genoese, whose principal object was to procure the expulsion of the Venetians from the East. But Michael Paleologos had the good sense to understand that the ruin of Venetian commerce would entail serious damage to his own, and he did his utmost to maintain good relations between the two Italian republics. In this he did not altogether succeed, as he found himself under the necessity of irritating Genoa by confirming many of the ancient privileges of Venice. On these conditions the Venetians consented to turn a deaf ear to the complaints and entreaties of Baldwin II., the dethroned Latin emperor, who wandered about Europe in the vain hope of obtaining help.

By the end of the thirteenth century the political influence of Venice in the Greek Empire had dwindled

to insignificance compared with her great commercial importance. As the latter increased, the jealousy of Genoa grew more and more dangerous, and the colonies held by Venetian vassals were in constant peril.

It was the misfortune of Venice that her last development had been too sudden. The slightest matter might compromise the safety of her colonies, and through them her own.

Yet her position was brilliant, and her strength was not fictitious. The terms of the treaty concluded with Michael Paleologos were such as might well flatter even the pride and vanity of a Venetian, and the Doge continued to call himself Lord and Master of a quarter and a half-quarter of the Roman Empire, while the permanent ambassador of Venice at Constantinople continued to be treated by the Paleologi as an ally and a friend.

Rom. ii. 186.

Before leaving the thirteenth century I shall say a few words about the early laws and those who made them, as an appropriate introduction to the story of the great conspirators who attempted to grasp the supreme power in spite of them.

From what has gone before, it must be clear that the Venetian Republic, as it was when it first took its place among the European powers, was the result of circumstances rather than of the growth of a race; and it is much easier to trace a result to its cause than a growth to its primitive type. Having got so far, the student will naturally be curious as to the internal mechanism of a government which began so early, lasted so long,

and worked, on the whole, with such wonderful precision and certainty.



CAMPIELLO S. GIOVANNI

It will not be necessary to recapitulate the attempts and experiments of the first fugitives after they reached

the islands. I need only recall to my reader the 'University of the Tribunes,' by which the different tribes were represented and were respectively governed, the first doges, the short return to the system of tribunes, and the second and final establishment of a doge as head of the Republic. At this point in history two main facts stand out at once: on the one hand, the unlimited power of the doges, whose authority was not restrained by any positive law, still less by any body of men in the shape of senate or council, whose chief aim was generally to make their dignity hereditary, and who were to all intents and purposes the absolute masters of their country's destiny while they lived; on the other hand, we find an assembly of the clergy and people, generally very far from exacting as to the doge's conduct, but ready and able to wrest the sovereignty from him if he pushed his absolutism too far for their taste. In those days a great simplicity prevailed. The chosen chief used his position unhesitatingly for his own advantage; the clergy were simple-minded; the people were very busy with their own affairs.

When these reactions led to bloodshed, it was usually because one or more of the great families had interests at stake and aimed at the supreme power; and one of the most common causes of discord was removed when the Doge Domenico Flabianico caused the popular assembly to pass a law forbidding the doges to associate any one with them in the sovereignty. This reform checked the tendency of the government to

turn into an hereditary monarchy, and another law passed at the same time gave the Doge two permanent counsellors, with power to add to their number others, chosen from the prominent citizens, when any very important matter presented itself. The latter measures had no practical result, for the Doge was left free to call in these 'notabili pregadi,' or 'invited notables,' or not to do so at his pleasure, and he invariably forgot their existence. As for the two counsellors, they might as well not have existed for any mention of them that is to be found in the documents of the twelfth century.

It gradually became clear that the rights and powers of the Doge must be more exactly defined, and that some means must be found for subjecting him to the will of the people without constantly calling together a General Assembly, which was not a slight matter. This need seems to have found expression for the first time about the year 1172.

Six months were spent in deliberations before an institution was agreed upon which should represent the nation. The General Assembly then determined upon the election of a certain number of councillors, who were to serve only for one year, and were to have the management of all affairs of state. They were to be eighty in number for each of the six 'sestieri' of the city, and therefore in all four hundred and eighty.

This was the origin of the 'Great Council,' of which the duties were to distribute the offices of *1172.*
government amongst those who were best able to fill them honourably and to the advantage of the

state; to frame laws, which were submitted to the approval of the General Assembly; and to examine all proposals that came from the Pregadi, with the consent and collaboration of the Doge and the six counsellors whose assistance, or guidance, was now imposed upon him without consulting his wishes.

In order to lighten the labours of the Great Council, another assembly of forty citizens was created, whose business it was to prepare the material for the Council's sessions. Little by little this assembly acquired more and more importance, till it shared with the Pregadi an authority which weighed perceptibly upon the decisions of the Great Council. The Pregadi, who became the Senate, and the Quarantie, or Council of Forty, were two similar and parallel powers, which it might have been to the advantage of the Republic to turn into one.

Rom. ii. 137.

The position of the Doge was now clearly defined. Under no circumstances could he any longer exercise absolute authority; and if he desired any reform, or had any law to propose, he was constrained to obtain, before acting, the approbation of his counsellors and of the Pregadi in the first place, and afterwards to get his measure accepted by the Forty, which then had to obtain the sanction of the Great Council, which, in its turn, if the matter were important, was bound to bring the bill before the General Assembly, to be voted on by the clergy and the people.

In time the custom was introduced according to which the Doge took an oath before the people on

the day of his coronation, called the 'promission ducale,' the 'ducal promise.' At first this oath was simply a promise to obey scrupulously the laws of the Republic, but little by little clauses were added to it which went so far as to deprive the Doge even of certain rights common to all other citizens of Venice. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the 'ducal promise' reached a stage of development at which it destroyed the liberty of the chief of the state, and became almost an insult to his dignity. During the interregnum between the death of each Doge and the coronation of his successor, three grave magistrates were chosen by the Great Council, called the 'Inquisitors upon the deceased Doge,' who held a solemn trial of the dead man's actions and of his whole life; at the same time five other personages studied the wording of the next 'ducal promise,' of which they were termed the 'Correctors,' their business being to examine the situation, and to ascertain how it might be possible for the future sovereign to advance his own fortunes at the expense of the public interests; to judge, or merely guess, what matters he might be able to influence too much, and thereby to decide in what way his actions and powers could be still further restrained and limited by introducing new clauses into the promise.

Rom. ii. 244.

The first law which was elaborated and passed by the Great Council was one which reformed the election of the doges. The Council wished to reserve the electoral right to eleven of its own members, but the people

protested against this encroachment on ancient traditions. The legislators then went to work to prove, with all the eloquence at their command, that the law they wished to pass did not in any way infringe the rights of the national Assembly, but that it was simply a wise and paternal effort on the part of the Council to help the people in their choice; for the law provided that eleven electors were to appear before the Assembly and present their candidate with the words, 'Here is your Doge, if this choice pleases you.'

Incredible as it seems, the people were prevailed upon to accept this proposal, not seeing that in so doing they were forfeiting their most valuable privilege. They even acclaimed with enthusiasm the first Doge who was elected under the new law in 1172. He was Sebastian Ziani. 'Long life to the Doge,' the people cried, 'and may he bring us peace!'

Rom. ii. 95.

On this occasion, it is true, the popular enthusiasm was justified, for the rule of Ziani was just and honourable. But, in spite of the success of the experiment, the Great Council introduced a further change in the law, and at the next election the number of electors was increased to forty, and later still to forty-one, in order to prevent a tie.

Rom. ii. 123.

Looking back on the labours of the Great Council in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, one cannot help being struck by the unchangeable purpose which runs through all the laws it passed, from the time it came into existence till it shut its doors in the face of the people, never to open them during the five

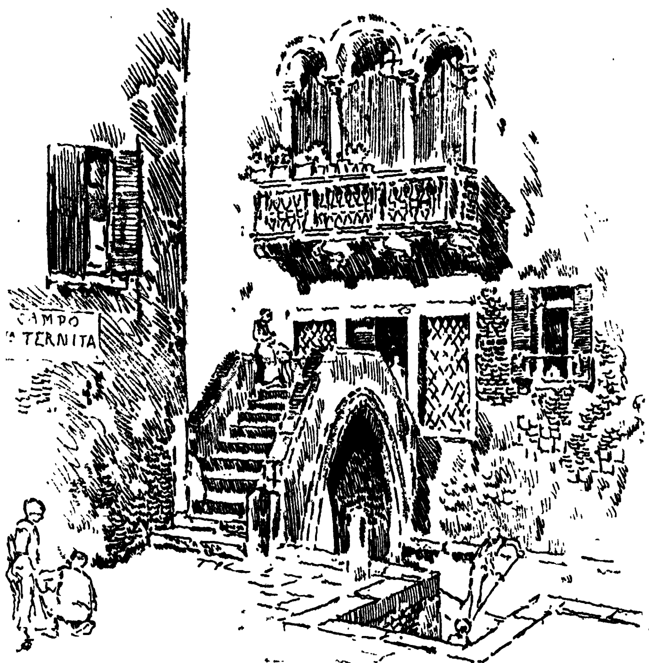
hundred years of history which then lay before the Republic. One cannot but acquire the conviction that the aristocracy set to work very early to get possession of the supreme power, to the exclusion even of the Doge himself, and that they worked out their plan in the course of a hundred and fifty years—say, five generations—without ever hesitating or turning aside after new ideas; and, moreover, that during that time the eyes of the people were never once really open to what was going on.

As soon as the relations between the Doge and the Government were established, the Great Council, always paternally 'guiding' the popular assembly, set to work upon laws affecting the administration and the conditions and relations of commerce. And here it must be said that several of the doges who reigned in the thirteenth century exhibited remarkable talents for legislation; the names of Orio Mastropiero, Enrico Dandolo, and Jacopo Tiepolo mark so many stages in Venetian progress and civilisation.

The first of these, Orio Mastropiero, the successor of Sebastian Ziani, occupied himself actively in drawing up a criminal code, which should render less arbitrary the sentences of judges who were often incompetent and were always elected provisionally. This code received the name of 'Promission del Maleficio,' the 'promise to, or with regard to, crime,' and it was frequently improved upon during the years that followed its promulgation. It provided for almost all possible crimes, and estab-

Rom. ii. 241.

lished for each one a punishment which seemed just according to the spirit of the times. These penalties in many cases seem barbarous to us, though it was



CAMPO, SANTA TERNITA

not the Venetians who invented strangulation, or the cutting off of the hand, or torture by red-hot iron, or the tearing out of the eyes and the tongue. The tribunals of all nations had long ago adopted these punishments, and it is certain that there was no country

where fuller proofs were required than in Venice before any severe penalties could be inflicted on a citizen. One of the chief merits of the Venetian code of that period, as compared with the codes of other countries, is that it points out to the judge the causes of crime, and the small misdeeds which may lead to great ones, as distinguished from those which are not likely to leave any results. Thus, for instance, the smallest act of disrespect to a respectable woman was punished almost as severely as an assault upon her.

For a long time the only permanent tribunal in Venice had been the 'Magistrato del Proprio,' which dealt with civil questions. The quarrels of the common people were judged by five 'wise men'—'savii.' Orio Mastropiero succeeded in passing a law for the institution of a court to deal with differences arising between Venetians and foreigners, or amongst the latter, and this was named 'Magistrato del Forestiero,' the 'foreigners' court,' so to say. In addition to these courts, which were subject to the authority of the Great Council, there were the 'Avogadori del Comun,' the municipal advocates, as we should probably say, who had authority in fiscal questions, and the list is complete. The State of Venice was directed and judged by the bodies I have enumerated.

Rom. ii. 137.

In matters of commerce all Europe recognised the superiority of Venice at that time, and long afterwards. A single illustration of the practical sense of Venetian merchants will suffice: they invented percentage, and

the word that expresses it. Before them, the world had always said, 'so many pence in the pound,' or 'four-fifths,' or 'seven-eighths.' The Venetians first conceived the idea, and introduced the practice, of reducing all commercial fractions to the common denominator, one hundred.

Orio Mastropiero further enriched the State with a permanent source of income by giving it a regular monopoly of salt and the salt trade.

Jacopo Tiepolo, elected Doge in 1229, was undoubtedly one of the most enlightened and intellectually well-balanced men of his age, and he seems to have embraced at a glance all those questions which his predecessors had examined one by one, and often only from a single side. He conceived the idea of compiling a complete code which should be a sort of permanent charter for the Republic, and he entrusted the execution of his plan to four 'learned, noble, and discreet persons,' for that is all that is to be learned of them through the note that precedes the original text of their work. That text consisted of five books destined to become famous in the history of European legislation.

This is no place to discuss a legal code, but no one who glances at Tiepolo's body of laws can fail to be struck by the many provisions it contains for the protection of women and their property. I do not know whether we ought to think that this speaks well or ill for the condition of Venetian ethics at a time when the slave trade was already thriving, and when there were a great number of Eastern female slaves in the capital.

On the whole, the laws may have been made with a view to protecting honest matrons from being plundered, directly or indirectly, by their handsome and perfectly unscrupulous rivals, whose influence was already becoming great, and was destined to be portentous.

At any rate, the honour and the lives of honourable women were not more carefully protected than their material interests. Every husband was obliged to render an account to his wife of the dowry she had brought him, and she could dispose of it by will as she pleased. A widow enjoyed the whole income left by her husband during a year and a day from his death, and during that time no one could by any means drive her from his house. If she declared her intention of not marrying again she preserved her right of residence all her life. Nevertheless, an unfaithful wife, if proved guilty, forfeited her dowry to her husband, and he could turn her out of his home.

Tiepolo's civil code provided also for a case which seems to have been not uncommon—namely, that in which a married couple, like the Doge Pietro Orseolo and his wife, agreed to take vows and part, each entering a religious order. The law here introduced the form of a separation of goods, leaving each party free thereafter to administer his or her fortune at will.

In addition to the immense labour connected with his body of laws, Tiepolo also occupied himself with the nautical regulations which had obtained authority by long use. I have no doubt that in so doing he used the Amalfi marine code, as in his laws he made use of

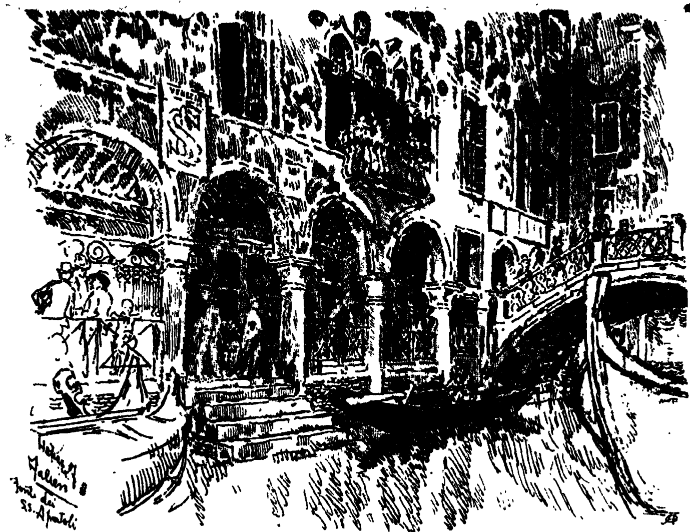
the Pandects of Justinian, discovered in Amalfi about a hundred years earlier.

Some of the clauses are curious. Captains and owners of ships are forbidden, for instance, to delegate their authority 'to a pilgrim, a soldier, or a servant.' In case of shipwreck, the whole crew was bound to work fifteen full days, but no more, at saving the cargo, of which they could then claim three per cent. Every ordinary vessel was to carry two trumpets, presumably as foghorns. Very large ships were to carry a sort of orchestra, consisting of two bass drums, one drum and one trumpet. The marine code has some interest also, as indicating the general nature of the merchandise carried by Venetian vessels: woven stuffs, pepper, incense, indigo, sugar in the loaf, myrrh, gum arabic, aloes, camphor, rice, almonds, apples, wine and oil are to be found mentioned, with many more articles of commerce.

Tiepolo's code bears the stamp of a sort of generous but not foolish simplicity, which really survived in the Republic until dreams of foreign conquest brought her into danger, and she awoke to find that dangerous enemies had wormed their way even into the ducal palace. It was then that she began to multiply magistracies and to frame innumerable laws that interfered with and neutralised each other; and so she lost in strength what her system gained in details. There was far more wisdom in the five books of Jacopo Tiepolo's 'Statuto' than in the innumerable volumes of laws that were put together from the fifteenth century to the

eighteenth. It may be asked whether Tiepolo's code sufficed because the people in his time were virtuous and law-abiding, or whether virtue and the love of law declined as the number of laws increased. The latter hypothesis can certainly be defended.





THE HOUSE OF FALIERO, PONTE DEI S. S. APOSTOLI

VII

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY IN VENICE

To the majority of people the fourteenth century in the history of Venice is memorable only for the great conspiracies which took place in that period, and which, even in the minds of cultivated Italians, seem to fill it completely, though only two, or at most three, are recorded, and the action of each in turn was of short duration. These three great conspiracies were those of

Marino Faliero, of Tiepolo, who was at the head of a



THE TIEPOLO PALACE

vast movement, and the third may be described as that of Marino Bocconio, whose history is not yet known in all

its bearings. Bocconio, in lack of trustworthy details, has been crowned the martyr of the aristocracy; Tiepolo has been exalted as one who nobly and generously sacrificed the interests of his caste for the general good; as for Faliero, he is almost universally looked upon simply as the jealous husband of a young and beautiful wife. Thanks to the efforts of innumerable novelists and playwrights, these three figures represent to the average reader of history a synthetic picture of the whole century, and stand out gigantic, dark, and blood-stained against a gloomy background of barbarism, imploring pity or crying out for vengeance to all future ages.

The most striking pictures are not always the best portraits, as we all know, though we are often inclined to forget it. Most of us at one time or another have stood before a painting by Caravaggio or Gherardo delle Notti, in which men are seen in the act to move, half lighted by a flaring torch, and we have felt a strange and strong desire to know where they are supposed to be and whither they are supposed to be going. Our eyes search the black depths of the picture as if we were peering out into the darkness of a starless night, with an instinctive wish to distinguish some detail that may explain the figures in the foreground; and, failing to find anything, we turn away as from a vision seen in a bad dream. We shall not forget the strong features, the tremendous muscles, the mysterious, anxious eyes, and when we think of them we shall still wonder where those men were, in a cavern

or out of doors, in the crypt of a church or in the forest, and whether they were alone or were followed by a crowd in the darkness. Who saw them pass? Who heard their low and anxious voices? Upon what nameless errand were they bound?

I have often thought that impressions much like these are produced on most minds by the names Bocconio, Tiepolo, Faliero. Yet each of them, in true history, had his companions, his friends, his enemies; and if each stood alone as a type, yet all were the result of their own times, and every one of the three was in himself the cause of a separate train of events.

Hitherto the story of Venice has been that of her growth; she has risen from the waves in the clear breath of the northern Adriatic, at once gentle and full of life; she has grown up into the light, full of a sweetness of her own, but burning with youthful courage, and suddenly, in the period of which we now have to treat, she has changed from a child to a full-grown woman. Pursuing, or pursued by, the impression of her strong personality as a living creature, rather than as the capital city of a great power and the scene of action in the lives of great men, we may compare her to a woman of divine beauty, yet almost tragically jealous of her own freedom, fierce to her enemies, dangerous to those who trust her, a loving mother to her children so long as they are obedient, but a ruthless and cruel queen towards her rebellious subjects. A woman, in short, possessing a sort of dual nature, aspiring to the dignity of being feared, yet

moved by the desire of love ; so unwilling to submit to the slightest influence of another that she would willingly despoil herself of all her riches and of every possession, and shed even the last drop of her blood, rather than forgo the smallest shred of her proud independence.

It is true that the figures of the great conspirators are very prominent in the picture we evoke of those times ; yet beside them stand great captains, law-givers, and artists, and the background is filled with a most interesting population devoted in turn to labour and pleasure, to commerce and to war, and full of the pride of a life of its own. The germs of corruption are already manifest, but they will not develop until a later time, when the beautiful lady, Venice, less young indeed, but imbued with a charm more subtle, descends to the slow enjoyment of the fruits of her victories, and loses herself in the intoxication of a perpetual carnival.

Historically speaking, the fourteenth century in Venice begins two or three years before 1300, since the year 1297 is separated from those which preceded it by a far greater distance than it is from the beginning of the fifteenth century, owing to the profound changes brought about in the government and life of the city by the closure of the Great Council.

The history of the century in which the Republic reached the culminating point of her strength and development begins quite naturally with a glance at this memorable law and its consequence. The famous

measure which, officially at least, changed the already ancient commonwealth of Venice into a government which, though aristocratic, still proposed to be republican, was not the work of a day any more than it was the creation of any one doge. It was not a revolution, but rather the result of a slow, inevitable evolution, peaceful in character, of which the first beginnings can barely be traced, far back in history, in the struggles of rival factions of the aristocracy.

So far as factions are concerned, none but those of the nobles ever had any influence on Venetian history, for the parties that existed amongst the people never engaged in politics, and while they bore one another many a traditional grudge that had its origin in the early jealousies of the settlers, we never find them mixing in conspiracies against the Government or breaking out in sedition and rioting. Even the mutual hatred of Niccolotti and Castellani disappeared completely as soon as the need of public defence called out the genuine patriotism of both.

In brief, the following is the story of the 'Serrata,' the closing of the Great Council for the exclusion of the people, a measure without parallel, except, perhaps, in the legislation of Rome.

According to a statute which regulated the election and the offices of the Great Council in 1172, and which was perhaps instituted in that year, the Council was composed of a variable number of members, originally four hundred and eighty, and never more than five hundred, who were elected every year

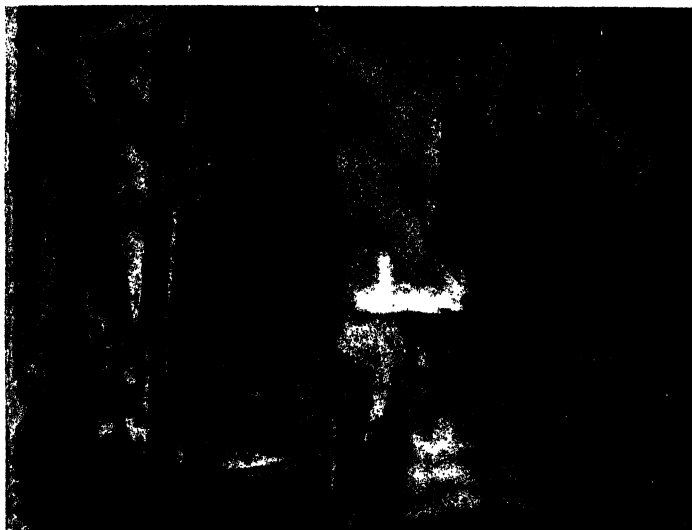
Rom. ii. 90, 341.

without any distinction of class from the principal citizens, and undoubtedly, in the great majority, from the aristocracy.

The position it occupied in the Republic has, I think, no example elsewhere. In one shape or another it had always existed, and there was an aristocracy amongst the first fugitives from the mainland; from that time on, the nobles and the people, the tribunes and the artisans, had fought like comrades against the barbarians, as well as against the elements of nature. Like shipwrecked men of one country, speaking one language, they had been as brothers; the noble families had been the chief defenders of the new home, and its earliest law-givers, and they transmitted to their descendants a traditional influence which was rarely misused in earlier times. The people did not hate them, as the populace has always hated the aristocracy in agricultural countries; for agriculture, where the poor work on the estates of the rich, seems to degrade both alike, or at least to brutalise them, whereas men who till their own lands almost always grow in character and independence. In Venice, while the people looked up to the nobles as their intellectual and social betters, they did not cease for a long time to regard them as their allies and helpers.

The nobles, therefore, had taken the lead from the beginning, and they kept it without difficulty and almost without opposition; in politics the people effaced themselves, trusting to the ruling class to maintain the liberties of the maritime state abroad,

both in the east and the west, and confident that the commerce and art of Venice would continue to develop under its influence. The nobles were ambitious, it is true, but they had nothing to gain by oppressing the people, for they were themselves the principal creators of the public wealth. They dominated the people,



BOATS OFF THE PUBLIC GARDEN

which is quite another matter ; until the fifteenth century they cannot fairly be said to have abused their power, and the privileges they kept for themselves involved the heaviest responsibilities. If they held control of the tribunals, yet were these as ready to try the nobles, and even the Doge himself, as to judge the poorest fishermen of the lagoons ; and though the

Doge could only be a noble, his head might fall under the axe of the common executioner, the lowest of the



COURT OF APPEALS, GRAND CANAL

low. Unlike the aristocracies of other countries, that of Venice never claimed for itself exemption from justice.

These facts, which cannot be denied with truth, seem to me to show that the closure of the Great Council was not such a violation of the rights of man as it has often been represented to be. Soon after the middle of the thirteenth century the nobles seem to have judged the times ripe for the great change, and a sort of preliminary weeding of the Council began.

In 1277, apparently in order to lend dignity to an assembly performing such high duties, a measure was passed which rigidly excluded from the Council all persons who were not of legitimate birth. In 1286 the Council of Forty, in order to assure to the nobles a constant and legal supremacy, proposed to limit eligibility for their own number to the members of the Grand Council, and to those only whose fathers and paternal grandfathers had already sat there. This attempt failed, and the bill was rejected, principally owing to the opposition of the Doge, Giovanni Dandolo, who was an honest man, free from the prejudices and passions of caste, and who wished the aristocracy to maintain its position by sheer superiority of intelligence and judgment without any legalised privileges.

Rom. ii. 342.

At that time, as has been shown in a separate chapter, the families of Partecipazio, Candiano, and Orseolo, and most of all the Tiepolo, had assumed the position of princes in the Republic. Each of them could boast of several doges, and all hoped to make the dignity hereditary for themselves. The Tiepolo cherished the most ambitious designs, and were always

Mol. Dogaressa.

doing their best to win over the people. In 1289, on the death of Dandolo, the electors within the palace heard the populace under the windows acclaiming Jacopo Tiepolo. To have submitted to the people's dictation would then have meant a step towards an hereditary monarchy, and the electors paid no attention to the cries from the street. Amongst the candidates was Pietro Gradenigo, a man who, though ambitious, was highly gifted and sincerely devoted to his country, and had always endeavoured to guide the Great Council towards an ideal aristocratic form of government which alone, in his judgment, could save the State from a selfish monarchy on the one hand and a feeble democracy on the other. The electors chose Pietro Gradenigo.

In 1296 he brought forward a measure which, it must be admitted, would have been an act of vengeance upon the people for attempting to proclaim Jacopo Tiepolo as Doge, and for receiving the announcement of Gradenigo's regular election in silence and ill-concealed discontent. The Doge now proposed to reform the process of election, as had been contemplated by the bill of 1286, but at the first attempt the measure failed, owing to the determined opposition of the Tiepolo family and their friends, who formed themselves into a party, which they called conservative. It was brought forward again in the following year, however, and passed by a majority of votes. It restricted the right of eligibility at each annual election to those who had sat in the Great

Rom. i. 344.

Council during one of the four preceding years, and it required that they should receive at least twelve votes from the Council of Forty which elected them. This was a successful stroke, for the Council of Forty consisted wholly of nobles, who would use their elective power altogether in accordance with Gradenigo's intention.

In order not to rouse the opposition of the people by giving the law an absolute form, it was declared to be only provisional, and to be in force from one Saint Michael's Day to the next, that being the date of the election.

A year passed. So great was the prestige of the aristocracy and its power, and so completely accustomed were the people to be guided by it and to be despoiled by it of their rights, that the resentment aroused by this so-called provisional law was not enough to prevent its becoming a lasting one, though its general form was still subject to possible variations.

Grave dissensions, however, appeared in the caste of patricians. Gradenigo found himself opposed on the one hand by the Tiepolo faction, on the other by certain families which, although descended from the ancient tribunes of the island, and consequently of most ancient and respected race, were excluded from the Great Council merely because they had not been represented in it during the last four years. It became necessary, therefore, to modify the law in the following manner:—

Gallicciolì, i. 330.

It was decreed that all who had sat in the Council

themselves, and all who, though they had not had a place there themselves, could prove at least one ancestor a member of the Council since 1172, should be eligible for the Council, by the vote of the Forty. It is a remarkable fact that the word 'nobles' is not to be found in any of these decrees; but it was clearly useless to insist upon a mere word when the whole aristocracy, which had proposed and passed the law, was to profit by it. The nobles never lost sight of a possible danger to themselves in the resentment of the people.

Last of all, it was decreed that those who had never themselves sat in the Council, nor had any ancestors who had been members, should be considered as 'eligible by grace.' This was done in order to leave a shadow of hope to ambitious men of other classes, an idea that they might some day be admitted as 'new men' into an assembly which was shutting its gates for ever. As a matter of fact, in the beginning a limited number of councillors 'by grace' were created, and some were chosen for their own personal merits, or to quiet the ambition of certain turbulent citizens. In order to be admitted in this manner, it was necessary in the first place to receive twenty-five votes from the Forty, and the votes of five out of six of the Doge's counsellors. A few years later, admission was made still more difficult by requiring thirty votes from the Forty, and it is likely that under this law very few 'new men' were ever elected. Venice was still far from the days when the first comer would be able to buy a

seat in the Great Council at auction, in order that the proceeds might help to pay the interest on the public debt. The exclusion of illegitimate sons, which was already in force, was maintained, and it was further ordained that no one under twenty-five years of age should enter the Council. The latter measure, however, was soon followed by a palliative one. Each year, on the fourth of December, the feast of Saint Barbara, the Doge placed in an urn the names of all young nobles twenty years of age, who at twenty-five would have the right to a place in the Council, and thirty of these were drawn by lot, and received permission to be present at the assemblies of the Council from that day, but without the right of voting; this constituted a sort of novitiate in those duties to which, at the regular established age, the young men would be called. The process of admission was called 'coming to the Barbarella.'

It appears to me that the last word contains a play on words; for it may mean 'the little Barbara,' the saint on whose feast the lots were drawn, or it may mean the down on the chin of a youth of twenty, 'the little beard,' for though an improperly formed diminutive, it is quite a possible one in dialect.

As may be imagined, the nobles showed the utmost haste and anxiety to prove their rights before the 'avogadori,' or counsel to the commonwealth, whose duty it was to decide upon them. In some cases there was evidence that an ancestor had sat in the Council at the end of the twelfth century, but it might be that there were no documents to prove it, and the most

extraordinary means were resorted to, to persuade the judges of the truth of the assertion. Some families, in order to prove that they were nobles, which of course was the real object of the inquiry, adduced the fact that they possessed great quantities of arms in their houses. The number of persons who, without the slightest chance of proving their rights, inscribed their names on the books of the avogadori, beginning in 1315, was so great that it was found necessary to impose a fine upon those who had done so without any chance of establishing their claim, and all titles whatsoever were carefully examined before being allowed. It is almost needless to say that the families about whose right there was no doubt possible did their very best to exclude all the rest.

Gallicciolí, i. 331.

As soon as the first list of members by right, and members who were eligible, was made out, it was decreed that they required to be elected, if they had attained the age of twenty-five years, in order to sit at the Council. It appears that no matter what the precise number of the members under this category might be, a certain number were always elected from among the 'eligibles,' a fact which explains the changing number of councillors in each year. There is reason to believe that the Assembly had never consisted of more than five hundred members before 1297, but that after the law passed in that year it reached (1340) the number of twelve hundred.

It is clear from all this that the measure known as the Closure of the Great Council did not consist so

much in any regular elections yearly as in a close limitation of the class of candidates, and the fact that it was necessary that they should be elected by the Council of Forty; whereas in former times they were elected by the people, represented in their turn by one or two electors in each of the six regions of the city, or else by two electors from the regions on one side of the canal, and two from the regions on the other.

Little attention has been paid to the law of 1298, which at the time appeared to be of secondary importance, but which had close connection with the others that had been framed by the aristocracy. The law of 1298 established that no one should belong to the Forty who had not already sat in the Grand Council, or whose father or grandfather had not sat there. By this law each Assembly was strictly dependent on the other, and the right to sit in the one, like the possibility of sitting in the other, became a privilege of noble birth.

The aristocracy had now completely got the upper hand, almost without a struggle, by skill, persuasion, and tact. Henceforth the history of Venice is that of the nobility, who had monopolised the power, and, with it, all responsibility. If Venice was great, healthy, and vigorous in the fourteenth century, she owed it to the nobles, who still treated the people generously and kindly. And later on, when the people allowed themselves to be intoxicated with the amusements provided them while their last rights were trodden under foot, the nobles were to blame. So they were, too, in the end,

when the Lion of Saint Mark was torn down from its column in the Piazzetta and broken upon a soil no longer free. The people were not oppressed at any time, but they suffered what was morally worse, for they were systematically hypnotised into a state of utter indifference to real liberty.

The assemblage of so many nobles in the hall of the Great Council must have presented a splendid spectacle. It was rigidly required that all should wear the cloak, or toga, of violet cloth, with its wide sleeves and hood lined with warm fur in winter and with ermine in the milder seasons. Here and there a few red mantles made points of colour, those of the High Chancellor and of the avogadori of the commonwealth, though the latter appear to have worn only a red stole over the cloak of violet. There were black cloaks, too, and they marked the ecclesiastics who belonged to the Council, for until 1498 priests who proved that they were nobles were eligible like the other members of their family.

When the Council was to meet, an official called the 'comandatore,' a sort of public crier, proclaimed the summons from a fragment of a porphyry column, which stood upside down on its capital at the corner of the Piazza of Saint Mark towards the ducal palace, and another issued the proclamation from the steps of the Rialto, these being the two most frequented points of the city; at the same time full notice was given of the offices which were to be distributed at the coming Council by

Rom. ii. 263.

the High Chancellor. At the appointed hour the cavaliers appeared in the neighbourhood of Saint Mark's, spurring their comely mules; but it was forbidden to cross the Piazza itself, except on foot, because it was paved, so that the riders left their mules



THE FLAGS FLYING IN THE PIAZZA

tied up to the elder-bushes which formed a thick growth, exactly on the spot where now stands the Clock Tower at the entrance to the Merceria.

About 1356 the public crier's office was abolished, his place being supplied by the ringing of a bell in the tower of Saint Mark, in the evening after vespers, when the Council was to meet on the following morning, and

at the hour of tierce (half-way between dawn and noon), if it was to meet in the afternoon. At the time of assembling in council this bell was rung again, and the people nicknamed it the 'trotter,' because councillors who came late always

Galliccioli, i. 245.



THE CAMPANILE

reached the entrance to the Piazza at a sharp trot before the last strokes had rung.

By this time the appearance of the Piazza and the Piazzetta had been considerably modified. The 'Rivo Battario,' which formerly ran through the length of the square, had been filled up; the little church of Saint Gemignano had been demolished, and the great

Campanile had been built. The nobles used to meet before the Council upon the old platform, which was turned into a convenient place for walking, and here also there was built a covered loggia as a protection in bad weather. The first time that a young patrician came to the Council, either on his election by lot after the manner of the 'Barbarella,' or because he had reached his twenty-fifth birthday, a little ceremony took place on the platform or under the loggia, in which he was presented to his older colleagues, and a sort of civil bond began here between the man who was introduced and the person or persons who introduced him, which lasted through life, and received the general name of 'sponsorship.' I may remind the reader here that all bonds of sponsorship, called generally 'comparatico' throughout Italy, are under the special protection of Saint John the Baptist, and even now have an importance which foreigners find it hard to understand.

Rom. ii. 361.

Before the meeting of the Council the throng on the platform was swelled by those who came to solicit the councillors on private matters of their own, or were seeking offices or dignities which it lay with the Great Council to bestow, such as judgeships and magistracies. The 'private matters' might include anything connected with taxation, money loans, laws in general, pardons, and even the public peace and national alliances.

A curious custom was connected with such interviews. Those who had favours to ask of the Great

Council were accustomed to show their respect by taking the strip of cloth that hung down from their shoulder to the ground on the right side, and tying it or rolling it upon the arm, and this action was called 'calar stola,' and appears to have been the equivalent of the later custom by which the inferior takes off his hat to speak with his superior.

Gallicciolì, i. 355.

Mut. Costumi.

If any member of the Great Council had recently been bereaved of a near relation, it was upon the platform or under the loggia that he received the condolences of his peers, being himself wrapped in a black mantle with a train, of which the length diminished little by little as his time of mourning came to an end, until at last it was only a short black cloak; this in its turn was replaced by a simple leathern belt worn over the ordinary clothes instead of the usual girdle, which was made of velvet.

This meeting of the nobles in the Square was naturally the occasion for carrying on all sorts of intrigues; and in Venice, as in the early days of ancient Rome, the relations of client and patron played a large part in public affairs, and were productive of no small evil, especially in the creation of great numbers of minor offices merely for the purpose of satisfying the claims of dependants.

So the nobles loitered and talked between the Campanile and the two columns, one of red and the other of grey stone, which stand near the Grand Canal. These two columns, which had been brought to Venice

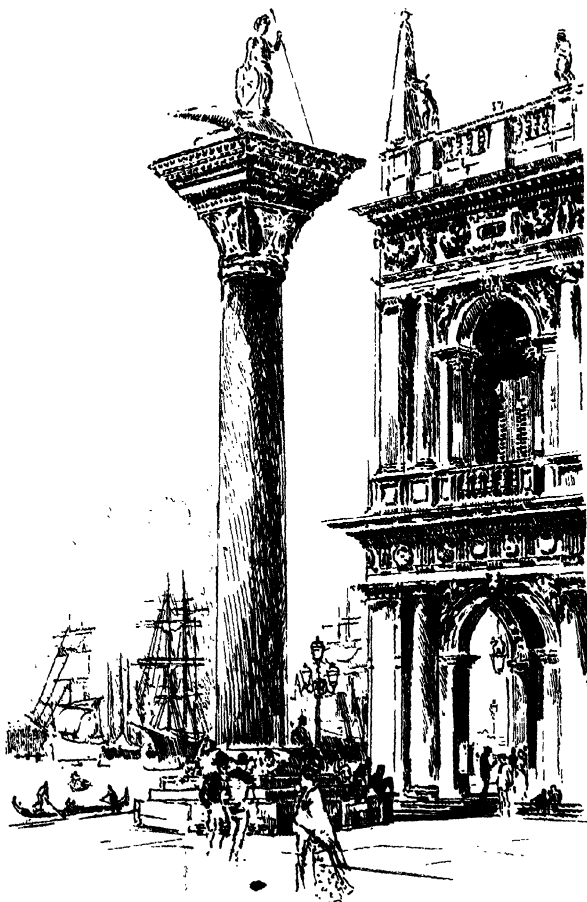
from the archipelago in 1127, under the Doge Domenico Michiel, had been set up about fifty years later by the skill of a certain Lombard named Nicola Barattiere. A chronicler tells in Venetian dialect that this engineer went to the Signoria, asked for ropes, timber, and beams, and then set to work with eight men, and no more. He drove down piles for the foundations, and having completed these in seven days he set up the columns on the eighth by means of ropes and capstans. When he was asked what reward he wished for his work, he only requested that so long as Venice should exist his descendants should be enfranchised and be free to keep gaming-tables between the two columns he had set up—contrary to the law which forbade all games of chance in Venice—and he asked for a decent lodging for himself and a small stipend. It may be noted that his name, 'Barattiere,' means at once a money-changer and a dishonest gambler, and it may have been given to him as a nickname after the fact. At all events his requests were granted, and he set up gaming establishments, with tables, between the columns for his own profit. At a later time this privilege became a monopoly of other speculators, and it only ceased to exist in 1529, nearly three hundred and fifty years later, when the destruction of all gaming-tables and booths, which marred the beauty of the Square, was commanded by the Government.

Lazzari, Guida.

Gall. i. 271.

This story recalls the action of Charles II., who, in order to reward certain Cavaliers who had sacrificed

their fortunes in his interest, and finding himself insuf-



ST. THEODORE

ficiently supplied with funds, conceded to a number of

them the right to keep gambling-tables between the columns and under the arches of Covent Garden. These persons were known as 'lottery Cavaliers.'

At the end of the thirteenth century the Lion of Saint Mark had been placed upon one of the two columns in the Piazzetta, while upon the other was set up the statue of Saint Theodore, the co-patron of the city ; so that the common people of Venice, by way of expressing that a man was driven to the last extremity, used to say, 'He is between Mark and Theodore.' In connection with the column of Saint Mark it is worth while to quote the answer given not many years ago by a gondolier to a lady in regard to the emblem of Saint Mark. All the other winged lions visible in Venice hold an open book under their paw, and the book is placed in such a way that one may read the usual motto—'Pax tibi, Marce.' But though the book of the lion on the column is really open, it lies down, so that from below it appears to be shut ; and the lady in question inquired of her gondolier what the cause of this difference might be. 'It is because,' replied the gondolier, 'when a man got between these columns his account was closed'! The story shows how vividly the people still remember that the gallows were sometimes erected there. It seems strange, however, that the young patricians, while waiting for the first hour of the Council, should have patronised gaming-tables set up so close to the place of public execution, and it is now generally considered that executions originally took place between the red columns in the

Dalmedico.

high first story of the ducal palace, overlooking the Square, and that the object of transferring them to the spot between the columns of the Piazzetta was to drive people away from gambling there.

After this brief glance at the development of the aristocracy and its legal institution as the ruling caste, it is necessary to consider the nature of that body which lay between it and the working people, and which included all well-to-do Venetian citizens in general.

For in Venice, as in most countries where the social equilibrium of large numbers of mankind is natural and not artificial, the population had long separated spontaneously into three classes. As long as the work of organising the new republic was going on the three fraternised, for the law granted no privilege to any one, and the men who imposed their opinions and their will upon the rest, without any sort of violence, were without doubt the most gifted members of the community. Nothing, as Daru justly observes, assured to the nobles, up to the end of the thirteenth century, any right not possessed by all the other citizens. Nevertheless, as he adds, the important office of High Chancellor had been especially reserved for non-nobles several years before the closing of the Great Council, which shows that custom, if not law, accorded other privileges to the descendants of the early tribunes.

Daru, i. 314.

It was not to be expected that after the final closure of the Great Council all the rest of the people should remain in a condition of thoroughly legal equality. There were, for instance, artists of great merit, magis-

trates whose families throughout many generations had commanded the general respect, and were by no means willing to be thus forced down to the level of the fishermen of the lagoons. The nobles considered that this high middle class constituted a danger to themselves by its wealth and solidarity, and special measures were taken to propitiate it. As early as 1298, and while the noble class was acquiring its legal existence, we find mention of the citizen class, and of the manner in which it was divided. To belong to it certain requisites became necessary; he who aspired to its privileges must have been born in Venice of parents properly married, and without any taint of criminality; he was to owe nothing to the State, to have been exact in the duties of standing guard, etc., and he was obliged to prove that during three generations none of his ascendants had followed any mechanical or vulgar trade.

Rom. ix. 8.

In the same way in which the so-called 'Golden Book' of the aristocracy was compiled little by little under the supervision of the avogadori of the commonwealth, who were themselves chosen from the citizen class, at least in the beginning, so also under their authority another book was begun, called the 'Silver Book,' in which were inscribed the names of citizens 'de jure,' afterwards called 'original citizens.' After the closure of the Great Council the office of High Chancellor continued to be strictly reserved to this class, as when the office itself had been created some years earlier. It was of a nature

A. Baschet, Archives, 133.

to satisfy any reasonable and justifiable ambition. The High Chancellor was the head of the ducal chancery; he signed all public acts, all nominations to any important office, and was present at all the most secret meetings of the Councils, though only as a witness, and never with the right to vote. He was elected by the Great Council, and took office with a ceremony almost as solemn as that accorded to the Doge himself, and like the latter he held his position for life; he received a generous salary, and had precedence over all nobles, both in meetings and processions, both over the nobility of the Great Council and over the sons and brothers of the Doge, and was preceded only by the procurators of Saint Mark and by the six counsellors of the Doge. He wore the ducal purple with scarlet stockings, was forbidden to dress in black in public, and like the Doge he was privileged to wear his hat on all occasions. The form of address used to the head of the Republic was 'Domino, Domino'; that used in addressing the Chancellor was 'Domino,' without repetition; whereas all other patricians were addressed as 'Messer,' the usual prefix to the names of knights throughout Italy.

A. Baschet, Archives, 138.

Mutinelli, Lessico.

When the High Chancellor died his funeral took place in Saint Mark's with a pomp equal to that accorded to a dead doge.

Very valuable privileges were attached to the condition of a citizen 'de jure'; all chancellors were taken from those included in the 'Silver Book,' so that in the course of time, in the fourteenth century, a special

course of study was prescribed for young men destined for that career; and those who embraced it were



frequently sent to the smaller courts of Europe as 'ministers resident,' but not as ambassadors, and they could aspire to the highest commands in the army.

From all this it is clear that the position of the 'original citizen' class in Venice had a strong resemblance to that of the 'magistrate' class in France, for instance; and on the whole it had enough privileges to ensure its not being hostile to the nobility.

The art of glass-making contributed in such a degree to the wealth of Venice that glass-makers were regarded as benefactors of the State, and all the glass-makers of Murano were inscribed from their birth in the class of citizens 'de jure.' Another very wise measure of the Venetian Government with regard to this intermediate class between the aristocracy and the people was the concession of its privileges to foreign persons of respectable origin established in Venice. It was only in the middle of the fourteenth century that citizenship 'by grace' was regularly admitted, and it was of two kinds: the one 'de intus,' and the other 'de intus et de extra.' The first conferred only a certain number of privileges, as that of engaging in commerce, and of holding some office of secondary importance in the public administration; the second conferred the full privileges enjoyed by the citizens 'de jure,' including those of sending vessels to sea under the flag of Saint Mark, and of carrying on business in the cities and ports where Venetian commerce was established, with the full rights of a Venetian.

Although it was only in 1450 that the law regularised the admission to citizenship, a number of admissions took place before the time of the foundation of the caste.

The miserable conditions of navigation in the fourteenth century, and the depredations of pirates, caused many to request the privilege of navigating under the protection of the Venetian Republic. Those who asked this were generally noble and rich persons. For instance, in 1301 we find the favour asked by the Scrovegni of Padua, by Azzone, Marquis of Este and Ancona, in 1304 by the lords of Camino, mentioned by Dante, by Ludovico Gonzaga, lord of Mantua, and many others. Venice not infrequently offered the title of citizen, with all rights belonging to it, to persons who had exhibited special marks of talent in other parts of Italy; it was offered to Messer Ravagnino, a student of physical science in Belluno, and to Petrarch. It was frequently given to foreigners who had lived as long as twenty-five years in the city, and to others who had voluntarily submitted during a certain number of years to standing guard, paying taxes, and the like; and further, to those who, having married Venetian women of the citizen class, desired to fix their residence in the island of Rialto. Among the foreigners who were thus generally adopted, some of the most interesting in the fourteenth century were the inhabitants of Lucca, who between 1310 and 1340 fled before the tyranny of Castruccio Castracane. These were about thirty families, almost all of which had been in their own country spinners and weavers of silk, and they had brought a numerous retinue of weavers and spinners with them. The Venetians at once understood the advantage to be derived from this immigration of an

Molmenti, Vita Privata, 48.

industrious people. Until then the richest stuffs had been imported from the East, but from this time forward Venice began to develop a new industry. The fugitive families were received not only with courtesy, but with something like enthusiasm. The Senate assigned them a quarter in the Calle della Bissa, between the square of the Rialto and the church of Saint John Chrysostom, allowing them to govern themselves with their own magistrates, on condition that they should teach their art to the Venetians. The same courtesies were extended in the case of German and Armenian colonies. The race of Venetian citizens in this way received a new element, with new prospects of life and industry, by the introduction of the best element that could possibly have come to Venice from without. The Jews, however, attempted in vain at the same time to obtain the same liberty of existence in Venice. After being barely tolerated during fifty years, and kept under the closest supervision, they were at the end of the fourteenth century ignominiously expelled from the city, and obliged to keep within the confines of Mestre. I have not been able to discover the date at which they were again allowed to reside within the city in the quarter which is still pointed out as theirs.

Galliccioli, ii. 274.

A singular circumstance, already noticed in passing, presents itself in connection with all the conspiracies of the fourteenth century. The people continually sided with the nobles who had deprived them of their power, and they outnumbered them and were

superior to them in strength and moral force. They never lent any important help to any one who attempted to rouse rebellion against the existing civil order. It can hardly be supposed that this was the result of indolence, or of a lack of patriotism, since the Venetians were naturally very proud and extremely energetic. They seem to have considered themselves as bound to the aristocracy by the bond of gratitude, of common memories, and of common hopes ; and while they led an existence of generous comfort and ease, it satisfied them to be joint possessors of a country which had grown glorious in Europe. They looked upon the Venetian nobility as the first in the world, and Molmenti says, with truth, that the surnames of certain great Venetian families not yet extinct existed before the names of even reigning families were known in the rest of Europe. Until quite modern times, the 'people' very rarely gave any trouble unless they were hungry.

It has already been noticed here that in the other Italian republics the great houses had nothing in common with the people they ruled—neither their origin, nor their traditional points of view, nor even as a rule their interests ; and more than once they showed themselves ready to sell their country to the highest bidder, regarding it as their adoptive rather than their real home, and the population as property that went with the fields.

Sagredo.

But the nobles of Venice were true Venetians, and their ancestors had led those of their own people, by sheer superiority, before Venice had been founded ; and

the government of the islands had in reality been always aristocratic. The people had really never had much to say beyond confirming by a sort of acclamation the result of elections held by the nobles. The individual elected was sure to be one of the latter, chosen for his courage in war, or for his pious generosity in founding a church or a monastery in time of peace.

The Serrata only made a law of a practice which had existed a long time; and this sufficiently explains why the people did not rebel against it, accepting laws which only affected formalities, without in any way threatening the true sources of the Republic's vitality. The nobles legally monopolised a power which they had always succeeded in reserving for themselves; but the State did not monopolise commerce, nor industry, except as regards the salt trade and shipbuilding, and in these occupations the workmen received such compensation that many of them grew rich.

Furthermore, the Government supported all persons not able to work for themselves. Men and women who had reached an age at which heavy manual labour was no longer possible, but who were not helpless enough to do nothing, were licensed to sell vegetables and fruit in the public squares; but the State and the guilds supported regular asylums for the aged and infirm, for cripples, for widows, and for old sailors. Every one felt that the State could be relied upon, and no one feared to die of hunger.

The closing of the Great Council might affect the ambitious designs of a few men who had recently grown

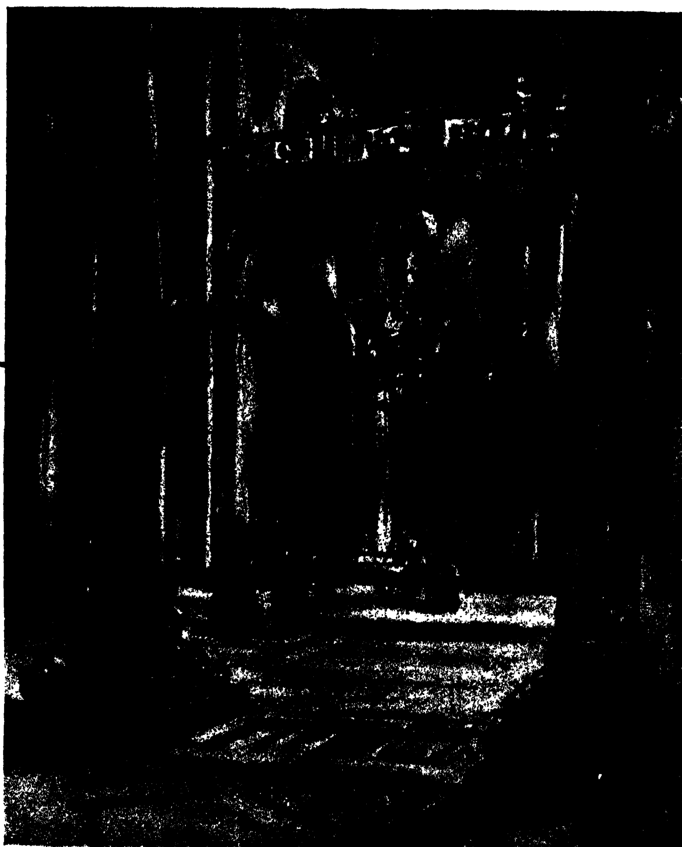


S. PIETRO IN CASTELLO

rich, and whose fathers had never sat there, but it could not possibly have any immediate effect on the lives of fishermen, seamen, salt-refiners, shipbuilders, and artisans, to none of whom it had ever occurred that the Council was meant for them. When a conspirator made a pretext of vindicating the rights of the people, the people laughed at him, and the motive which in all other countries has been the mainstay of revolutionaries was found not to exist. The people of Venice were, on the whole, honest, contented, and happy, and both laws and traditions combined to preserve them in that enviable state; and the Government itself provided wise alternations of work and rest, which greatly contributed to the same end. For every Venetian, whatever his condition might be, was expected to be a good sailor and a good soldier, and the regattas, public archery matches, and gymnastic exercises, which I shall presently describe, helped to make men both. In 1332 these competitions were made obligatory for all youths who had reached their eighteenth birthday. But another matter must be briefly explained before proceeding further.

In the story of the Venetian conspiracies no mention is ever found of the two famous factions, the Castellani and the Niccolotti, although the most bitter hatred was alive between them at the very time when Tiepolo was conspiring against Gradenigo. It is interesting to follow the rough and strong threads of those famous popular factions through the woof and warp of Venetian history; and it is curious to find oneself convinced that they never did the slightest harm to the government

of the Republic, for the reason that both of them loved their country sincerely.



THE GREAT LAMP, ST. MARK'S

The reader may remember that in the days of Paulus Anafestus, the first Doge elected by the popular

assembly, a violent dispute arose between the inhabitants of the islands of Heraclea and Jesolo, which turned into a pitched battle in the woods of Equilio, so that the stream which became the Canal Orfano was red with blood.

The former combatants, finding themselves shut up within the walls of one city, cherished their ancient grudges from generation to generation, and for more than five hundred years they gave vent to their hatred as best they could, keeping themselves divided, first as separate parties, then as separate wards, and finally both in wards and districts, according to the later divisions of the city; and fighting freely with one another whenever the public games brought them into conflict, under the names of Castellani and Cannaruoli, taken from the parts of Venice they inhabited—the one in the three districts of Castello, Saint Mark, and Dorsoduro, the other in those of Santa Croce, San Paolo, and Canarreggio at the other end of the city. They had continued their separate existence about three hundred years without seriously disturbing the public peace, never intermarrying, never even entering the cathedral by the same door. But in the year 1307 a certain Ramberto Polo was the bishop of Castello, and the bishop of Castello was ex officio the bishop of Venice, and depended from the patriarch of Grado. Now this Ramberto attempted to exact certain tithes which his predecessor had considered it right to renounce. Five districts of Venice, and among them that of Saint Nicolas, refused to pay these tithes. The bishop insisted, and

the 'Niccolotti,' and maintained as its device the black banner and costume of the Cannaruoli, whereas the



S. PAOLO

faction of the Castellani kept the red. The murderers repented and obtained pardon, but the new hatred, which had grown upon the old grudge, was relentless.

Up to this time the custom of fighting only with reed-canes had been maintained by both sides; but having heard of the celebrated pugilistic encounters which were practised at Siena, they now determined to introduce a custom which offered such excellent opportunities for fighting. From September to Christmas regular encounters took place every Sunday upon the bridges, mostly built without parapets, where the two factions met, each endeavouring to knock and throw as many of their adversaries as possible into the canal. The bridge which was preferred for this form of exercise was that of Saint Barnabas, which soon got the name of 'Ponte dei Pugni,' the 'Bridge of Fisticuffs.' A less dangerous form of competition was also practised by the factions, under the name of 'Forze d'Ercole,' literally the 'Strength of Hercules.' A platform was erected upon empty hogsheads, if the game was to be played on land; or on punts, if it was to be tried on the canal, as more usually happened; and upon this foundation the men built themselves up into a sort of human pyramid. The base was formed by a number of individuals standing close together, and linking themselves still more firmly by means of light joists which they held upon their shoulders; on these joists other men stood, and others again above them, until the pyramid came to its point in a small boy at the top. The prize belonged to that faction which could set up the highest pyramid in this way, and keep perfectly steady while the unenviable little boy at the apex performed acrobatic feats. This lad received the

Mutinelli, Costumi.

name of the 'crest,' as if the whole were a coat of arms.

The popular songs of that time exhibit the deep hatred that smouldered between these divisions of the people; and they have come down through the centuries to the Venice of to-day, with such little changes of speech as give new life to a thought without changing its substance.

The Castellani and Niccolotti, being constantly opposed to each other, systematically abused each other in verse during the days that preceded the encounters. Here is one from the side of the Niccolotti, for instance :—

Dalmedico.

> O thou great Devil, Lord of Hell!
> Grant me this I ask of thee.
> I recommend to thee the Niccolotti!
> I pray thee carry all the Castellani off to hell!
> Give the winning flag to the Niccolotti.

The following is a fine example of party pride :—

> When a Niccolotto is born, a god is born!
> When a Castellano is born, a brigand is born!
> When a Niccolotto is born, a count is born!
> When a Castellano is born, he turns out a gallows-builder!

And here is another :—

> We are the Niccolotti, that is enough!
> We will march with the black scarf, and with the flower in our hat; and there are knife-wounds for the pigs of Castellani!

On the other hand, the Castellani sang as follows :—

> Swine of ill-born Niccolotti, how can you expect the girls to love you?
> All night you wallow in the mud, you ill-born swine of Niccolotti.

The mud is that of the lagoons, the Niccolotti being fishermen.

In spite of this constant exchange of amenities, and in spite of their love of fighting each other, neither Bocconio nor Tiepolo nor Faliero ever got any advantage from the popular factions. I can recall no other case nor similar instance in history. They abused each other, but they all felt that they were sons of Saint Mark, a sentiment which strongly appears in another song of more generous type which was sung by the two factions together on occasions of common peril :—

> Are we not all of one nation ?
> Sons of Saint Mark, and of his state ?
> May God preserve it, and make it grow,
> For all the good we have we get from Him !

The Niccolotti had a species of constitution ; they had special customs of their own, and a head who was officially called their 'gastaldo,' but who by an old tradition bore the title of the 'fishermen's Doge' ; and who on all public occasions arrayed himself in red like the High Chancellor, with wide skirts lined with fur in the winter, and, like the real Doge, wore red stockings and shoes of red morocco. He held so much to the right of wearing these red hose that he never appeared without them, even in ordinary life, and when fishing in his boat.

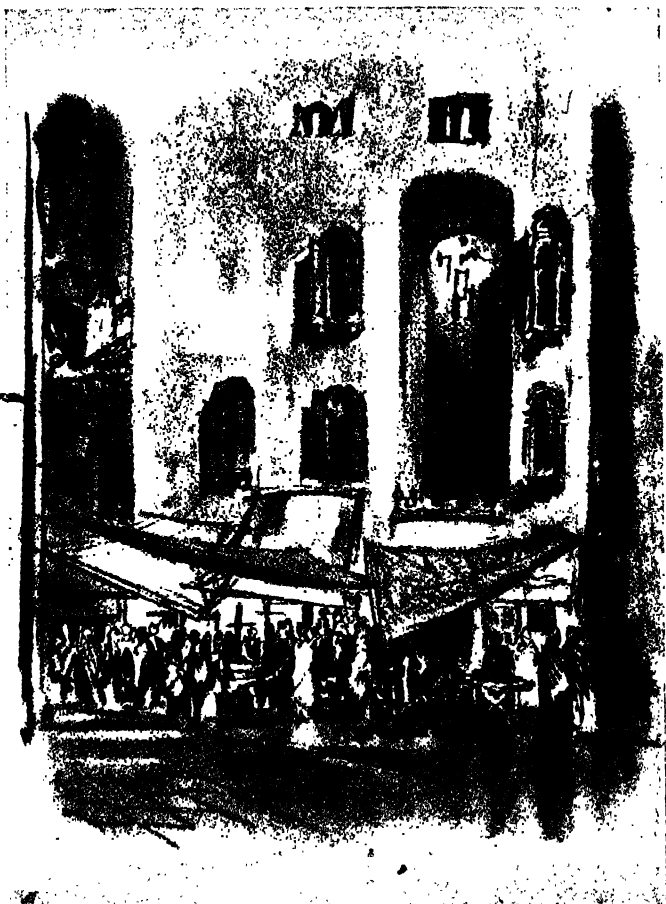
Mutinelli, Less.

Cecchetti, Corte.

Sagredo.

Little by little this chief of the people obtained the right to follow the Doge to the 'Espousal of the Sea' in a beautifully decorated boat towed by the Bucentaur ;

he was granted the privilege of dining with the Doge



THE LITTLE FISH MARKET

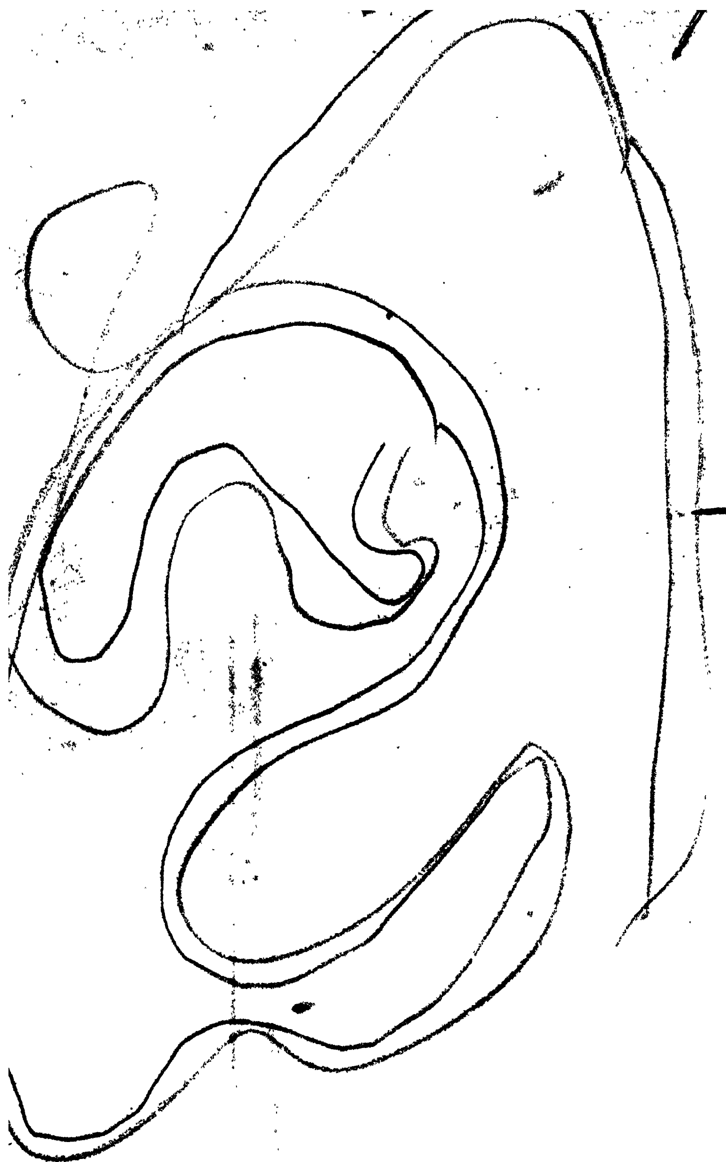
on solemn occasions of the year, and he received the

more material benefits of levying a duty on the fishing-boats of his district, and of keeping two counters for selling his fish, one at Saint Mark's and the other at Rialto; for all the Niccolotti were fishermen by profession, and they were associated together by their common interests like members of one numerous family. These fishermen elected their head by a complicated system, in a solemn assembly held in the church of Saint Nicolas of the Mendicoli, in the presence of their parish priest and of the real Doge's doorkeeper, who acted as ducal ambassador, and regularly presided over these assemblies in the name of the sovereign, in order to put down any disturbance which might arise out of differences of opinion between the voters. At a later time, instead of the porter, the Doge sent one of the secretaries of the Senate for this purpose. After the election was decided the Doge's representative stood forth, carrying the standard of the Niccolotti, and the new 'gastaldo' knelt down before him, and received the flag with the following words of investiture: 'I confide to you this standard in the name of the Most Serene Prince, in token that you are head and chief of the people of Saint Nicolas, Saint Raphael, etc.'

The bells of the church were then rung out; and on the following day, or within two or three days at the latest, the elected man, accompanied by the parish priests, and preceded by drums, trumpets, and one halberdier, who carried the standard with the image of Saint Nicolas, went to present himself to the Doge, in order to receive confirmation of his office. The Doge



When the fishing boats are in



received him in one of the great halls, and exhorted him to be 'a good father to that family (of the Niccolotti), and to be careful of the public dignity'; assuring him that if he did so the Doge himself would constantly be his protector, and assist him on every occasion. Then the head of the fishermen came near to the Doge, and knelt down before him and kissed his hand and the border of his mantle.

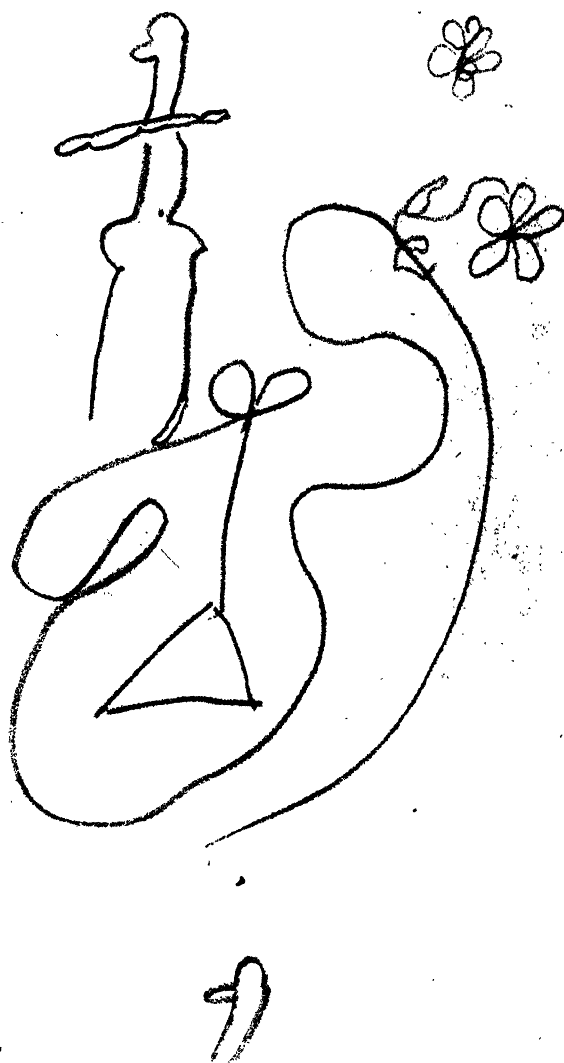
The chronicles are inclined to explain the conflicts between the two factions as the result of exaggerated rivalry in everything resembling public games. The latter were very common, as the Government took every occasion to provide amusements for the people; and as Signor Molmenti justly says, 'the extreme frequency of popular festivals in Venice might seem surprising, if one did not take into consideration the enormous energy continually expended in business and work, which brought with it the necessity of frequent interruptions and amusements.' After all, there was a great deal of hard work connected with the Venetian manner of conducting such diversions. As early as the beginning of the fourteenth century there were rowing matches for small boats and skiffs on all important occasions, and, moreover, races for vessels of fifty oars. These boats were a species of outrigger canoes, each capable of carrying fifty rowers, who stood to their oars. Similar boats, if they may be dignified by that name, were rowed by the Castellani and the Niccolotti, all wearing their red and black costumes or badges, and their emulation was shown as much in the manner of adorning their craft as in the

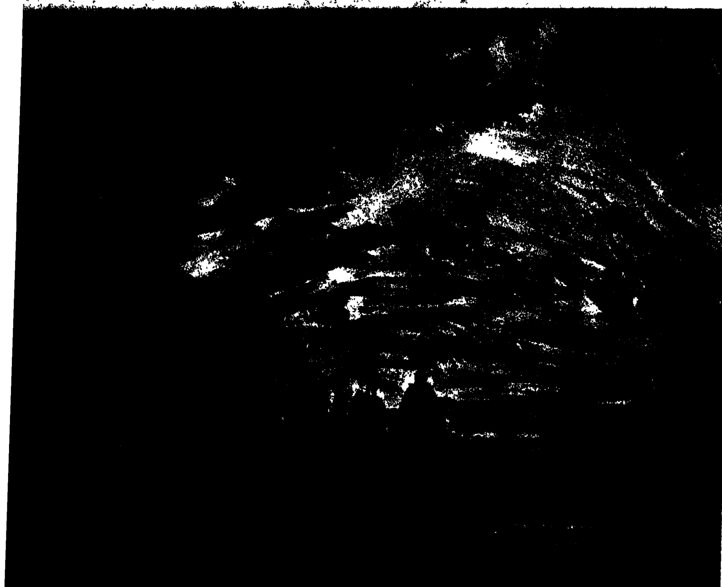
race itself. These rowing matches became celebrated throughout the world, and first received the name of 'regatta.' The Government encouraged them as being useful for a people that depended chiefly upon navigation for its livelihood, and offered large prizes to the winners. The first prize was a red purse full of gold; the second purse was green and filled with silver; the third blue, containing small change; the fourth was empty, and of a yellow colour, and the figure of a little pig was embroidered upon it, which denoted that the winner was to receive the live animal for his share.

Mutinelli, Costumi.

The practice of shooting at the mark was also very popular in Venice, and as usual the Government managed to derive advantage from it. All men were obliged to take part in it after the age of eighteen—nobles, citizens, and plebeians; and during the competition, a fact not overlooked by the wise administrators of the Republic, the young fisherman was in all respects the equal of the son or nephew of the Doge himself, and if he won a prize over him was practically his superior. The weapon most commonly used in those times was a cross-bow, which was made entirely of walnut until 1352, and after that was constructed of wood and steel. It was so cleverly made, we are told, that eight bolts could be shot from it in quick succession—this being accomplished in some way not clearly explained, by means of a wheel with eight cogs.

Bows and arrows were also used for shooting at the mark, the arrows being made in a place which received,





Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

Clouds of Sunset

and still retains, the name of the 'arrow manufactory,' the Frezzeria. They were of pine or poplar, about thirty inches long, thicker at the point than at the butt, and provided with three feathers, like most of the arrows used in the Middle Ages.

Great magnificence was shown in these shooting matches, both in regard to the cross-bows and the quivers. We still have specimens of quivers of that period, made to hold from fifty to a hundred bolts, of red leather embossed under heavy pressure and carved with a sharp tool, being ornamented at the top with double lions of Saint Mark. The targets were set up at different points of the city, but the most famous was on the Lido. On the appointed days, boats manned by thirty oars were in readiness at the entrance to the Grand Canal, near the Piazzetta, and it was the rule that these were to be rowed only by competitors in the shooting. At twelve o'clock the heads of the 'duodene,' which seem to have been sub-districts, arrived with detachments of from ten to twelve men each, recruited in all classes of the city; they made their way to the scene of the competition, followed and encouraged by the multitudes that came to look on. Lots were drawn to determine the order in which the young men were to shoot. At the meeting held at Christmas, whoever hit the bull's-eye first received ten yards of scarlet cloth; the second received six yards; the third won a cross-bow and quiver. At the meeting held in March, the prizes were of another stuff called 'borsella'; and in May, a third kind of material was given, called 'tintilana.'

Among other popular festivals of the Venetians, the free fair held at the Ascension was of great importance. Until 1357 this lasted eight days, but, after that, it was prolonged during a fortnight. It was at this time, as I have said elsewhere, that the famous function of the 'Espousal of the Sea' was held. During the fair every kind of merchandise was allowed free entrance to the port, and was sold in the Square of Saint Mark's, in booths and on improvised counters, which gave that enormous space the air of a market. About the beginning of the fourteenth century it began to be the custom to wear masks during this period of mingled business and amusement. It is needless to say that the fair became a source of large wealth to the treasury, and an opportunity for making money for many, since at that time an immense number of foreigners came to Venice from all parts of the world. It has been estimated that at times as many as two hundred thousand strangers were present in the city for this occasion, which I shall hereafter take an opportunity of describing with more detail in the form it had acquired in a later age.

Cecchetti, Mercato.

Strangers who visit Venice often wonder idly whether there is any meaning in the half-cabalistic signs coarsely painted on the dyed sails of the fishing-boats that glide in towards evening, one after the other, and take their places for the night, like weary live things coming home to sleep. There shines the roughly-drawn presentment of a cock, apparently in an attitude of ecstasy before a rising sun that bears a strong resemblance to an omelet;

and there a mystic beast that may be meant for a donkey, unless it stands for a grasshopper. You may wonder which, unless you ask of some superannuated old fisherman loitering on the quay at sunset with his pipe for company. But he will tell you that the cock and the rising sun are the hereditary emblems of all the de-



OFF THE PUBLIC GARDENS

scendants of ancient Josaphat, a fisherman of Padua who adopted them long ago; and that the monster grasshopper-donkey is really a horse, and belongs to another family of fishers, the Cavallarin; and so on, through as many as you can point out. It is the heraldry of the fisher people, begun long ago by the Niccolotti and preserved religiously by their descendants

to this present time; and though heraldry is ancient in Venice, there may be stone coats of arms on walls of time-worn palaces that look down upon the Grand Canal, less old than some of these rude ancestral bearings of the sea, that have been handed down from generation to generation through uncounted centuries.

Possibly, though no one would be bold enough to call it certain, the fishermen who were the Niccolotti formed the first and oldest guild in Venice; at all events the others bear a strong resemblance to theirs when we first hear of them.

Molmenti, Vita Privata.

Cecchetti, Corte.

Sagredo.

They grew up in Venice, as they did in Florence and other cities of Italy, close corporations of arts and trades, which were protected by the State, and assured many privileges to those who belonged to them, chief of which was a sort of monopoly of each branch of industry, which enriched the workmen without injuring the State. Under laws by which no new object could be sold except in properly authorised shops, there was no fear of foreign competition nor of home depression. Each guild was a little republic in itself, thriving in the heart of the great maritime Republic, occupied in administering its own affairs, and never making itself a source of anxiety to the Government by meddling in politics.

It thus appears that on the whole the people not only entertained a sort of natural devotion and a feeling of gratitude towards the nobility, and lived a life of tranquillity and contentment, with plenty of holidays and

public feasts, with ample means of earning a livelihood, and under such provisions of public charity as made anything like pauperism next to impossible; but also that their true strength consisted in the institution of the arts and guilds, which were recognised and protected by the laws. I have already said, in respect of the eleventh century, that each art existed like a small republic in the midst of the great one; and in the fourteenth century more than one hundred of these so-called arts had their individual constitutions. One of these constitutions contained a statute which forbade the members of the arts and guilds from doing anything which might interfere with or oppose the ordinances of the Government, and most expressly forbade anything which could be looked upon as conspiracy. Each art had its own 'gastaldo,' or judge, and a certain number of elders, who ruled it according to its constitution, and as connecting links between their own tribunal, which might be called a family court, and the central government of the State. There were also three judges called 'justiciaries,' who were elected by the Great Council. It was morally impossible for any one to exercise even the simplest and humblest of these arts until he had been admitted by the council of the one in which he wished to work. It would have been as dangerous as to introduce into Venice any sort of merchandise that was already manufactured there, and by that means bring about competition between Venetian and foreign products. So far as the higher arts and trades were concerned, such as, for instance, glass-making, it was strictly forbidden

to allow any workman to leave Venice who was in a position to take abroad the secrets of an industry of which it was intended to keep the monopoly at home.

Every sort of guild comprised many degrees and a number of officers, so that the liveliest competition went on between the members, the apprentice constantly striving to become a craftsman, while the craftsman thought of nothing but the moment at which he should be able to stand the test, which was a real examination, by which he might obtain a right to the title of 'master,' not only because the latter represented the highest degree to which he could aspire, but because it conferred upon the sons of whoever obtained it the right to become masters without being required to stand the test. The test examination for the 'degree' of master consisted in executing a difficult piece of work within a certain number of hours or days. For instance, a man became a master of mosaic paving when he could lay out and finish the pavement of a large room, so that not the smallest crack or crevice or flaw could be detected in it, and so that the level of the whole surface should nowhere vary by more than the thickness of a ducat.

In some of the arts apprentices were not admitted under the age of twelve; in others, such as shipbuilding, where the work was done in the open air, they could begin from the time when they were eight years old. Glass-workers were forbidden to make use of children's labour in such work as grinding glass, or in any kind of occupation that could injure their health, such as tending the furnaces during the hot season.

The workmen of the arsenal also formed several guilds of a superior order, and had special rules, which I shall notice in another place, for the arsenal did not reach the height of its importance and activity till the sixteenth century.

Each corporation or guild elected its 'gastaldo' by a majority of votes, and his authority may be described as partaking of the paternal, and of that of a justice of the peace. When any conflict arose between two or more members of the guild he was appealed to, and his verdict was perfectly legal. In grave cases, where it became absolutely necessary to appeal to the public tribunals, the latter were bound to take into consideration the rules of the charter of that guild to which the parties belonged; those rules were called the 'mariegole,' and no sentence was lawful which was in contradiction with them.

Within the guilds brotherhoods were formed, the aims of which were both religious and co-operative; and these took the name of 'schools,' which vied with each other in building churches and hospitals, and in making pompous appearances in public during the religious or civil festivals. The number of artisans inscribed in a guild was not determined, but the number of brethren in each school was limited by its statutes. Each school was directed by a 'gastaldo' and a number of elders, who were generally the senior members of the guild from which it was derived. This council of management was to admonish with grave words any brother who led an immoral life, to punish blasphemers,

and to be vigilant lest any of the brethren should play at games of chance, even dice being prohibited. The 'gastaldo' himself might be admonished by the elders, and required to perform 'great and good' penance, according to the terms of some of the charters. The brethren paid a tax of admission, and in many schools bound themselves to flagellation at Lent. A certain number of priests were admitted without any obligations, and from four to six physicians—both 'doctors of physic,' as they were then called, and 'doctors of wounds,' as surgeons were designated. No brethren were admitted under the age of sixteen years.

The brethren had a right to receive assistance from the schools in the form of money and of medicine, if they were ill, either at home or in the hospitals which were annexed to the abodes of some brotherhoods. We find it stated that in some cases the schools assisted a brother with a sum as large as three hundred of the 'small lire,' which was a very considerable sum for that time, being equal to about fifty pounds sterling. Among the advantages enjoyed by those who belonged to a school was that even when absent from the city they could claim succour from the brethren. The following words, translated from the statutes of the School of the Holy Apostles, framed in Venetian dialect of the thirteenth century, well express the general purpose of these institutions: 'Let the brethren be twelve good and honest men, who for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ are to live holily, in peace and charity, without fraud, pride, or murmuring, having ever before

their eyes the example of the apostles and the command of Christ, to wit, Love peace and charity, and love your neighbour as yourself.'



RIO DELLA PIETA

The worst of the misdeeds for which one of the brethren could be subjected to the dishonour of being expelled from the school was openly leading a bad life. The head of the brotherhood, upon the information of

other brethren and by his own knowledge, then warned the culprit to correct his ways. 'Let him be told to amend his life openly, for charity's sake; and if it be amended within fifteen days, then praise be to God, and let him go in peace.'

It sometimes happened that a brother, of his own accord, rather than be expelled, wished to quit a school, in entering which he had perhaps experienced some difficulty. To this end the statutes of some schools laid down that he should pay a considerable fine, that in the presence of his companions he should be placed upon a bier, and that while the bells tolled as for a dead man he should be carried round the church. After the passage of this law such cases grew much less frequent.

In the end the schools became very rich institutions, for the members not only contributed money, but they and their families, and doubtless many members of the guilds, worked for nothing on their churches, their hospitals, and their asylums for the old. The competition between different schools was keen, and led to their beautifying their oratories and their places of meeting with magnificent works of art, so that almost all the great painters of Venice first acquired fame under their protection.

In the fourteenth century such men as Carpaccio and Bellini, and later, Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto, were all humble brethren of the Guild of Painters and Varnishers, and they all, without exception, submitted in their schools to the authority of men who were very

likely nothing better than house-painters by profession, though they were undoubtedly men of high morality and probably of considerable cultivation.

As for the treasure that accumulated in the name of the guild, it was not only used for the sick and in aiding young artists, but it was also not unusual to give dowries to the daughters of poor brethren, and sometimes considerable sums were sent to members of the guild whom some urgent matter detained abroad without sufficient means of livelihood.

It is a singular fact, mentioned only by Cecchetti, that a number of nobles, possibly in the hope of obtaining influence over the guilds, but pretexting religious devotion, requested and were permitted to be inscribed as brethren. It appears that some of the brotherhoods attempted at the very first to defend themselves from this invasion, but were afterwards obliged to yield to the will of the Great Council, though they limited the number of nobles to be admitted so as to make it very small compared with that of the citizens. Later, however, in 1407, the Great Council, considering that this was a slight upon the aristocracy, required that all nobles should be admitted to the schools who wished it, provided that they were of good repute. But the nobility were not satisfied with this; they wished to join the schools and yet be exempt from the usual dues. A few of the guilds yielded, but we find among the papers of the school of Santa Maria della Val Verde, of the year 1320, that all nobles who joined it must submit to all

Cecchetti, Corte.

the requirements of the statute, and that for them the admission fees should be even larger than for ordinary citizens—'and let him be what he pleases,' concludes the article of the statute with some disdain. In other statutes we find that nobles could be admitted for nothing, but that if they chose to pay something as conscience-money, of their own free will, their offering would not be refused. Another right that the nobles arrogated to themselves was that of refusing to submit to flagellation in Lent, and the only schools where this custom was kept up decided that the nobles, by way of compensation, should pay a considerable increase of dues, and that the same immunity should be accorded for nothing to all brethren over sixty years.

On the whole, the effect of the guilds was to keep alive in the people a sense of their own dignity, and to distract them from hankering after the offices of state, for which quite another education, different studies, and an altogether different point of view would have been required. For the equilibrium of a permanent state one prime condition is that people should soberly, consistently, and, if possible, intelligently, mind their own business.

In the fourteenth century Venice was unlike all other cities, both as regards her external and internal administration, and the singularly divers elements of which her strength was made up. In order to gain a clear idea of the city's condition at that time, a word must be said concerning the numerous strangers who, though not taking up their abode permanently in the city,

passed through it or came to it on their way to the East, and during the great fairs. I have spoken already of those who established themselves in Venice, and who sometimes became citizens 'de intus et de extra'; I speak now only of that constant stream of travellers, merchants, and men of business—Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, and Orientals—who came and stayed a few weeks, or even months, where people would now stay as many days, who transacted their business, bartered their merchandise, and made acquaintance with the city, visiting its monuments, its churches, and even its war-galleys in times of peace. Venice showed them the most unbounded courtesy, and frequently offered them the most magnificent hospitality. Their presence never created the least disorder, and the manner in which the Government provided for their welfare is one of the most surprising things in the internal economy of the city.

When a stranger arrived in Venice and took up his lodging in one of the many inns, some of which, like the 'Luna,' the 'Selvatico,' and the 'Leon Bianco,' are still flourishing in our own time, and were famous in the fourteenth century, he found provided for him a tariff of prices, which protected him against any possible imposition on the part of the landlord; and he could hire a licensed guide to serve him lest he should lose his way in the streets, or be cheated in the shops. The authorities exercised a direct supervision over the rooms of the inns, requiring the most perfect cleanliness of beds and linen and blankets, and they

Mut. Costumi.

forbade the crowding of strangers beyond a reasonable limit. For the sum of fourteen soldi horses were provided with sufficient oats, hay, and straw.

At times, when many strangers visited Venice, the population of the city was almost doubled; and as the inns could not suffice to receive such a number, the municipality placed at the disposal of visitors such empty houses as it owned, and allowed private citizens to let rooms to strangers; but severe penalties were imposed upon any who should venture to let lodgings without a proper licence, or who should in any way impose upon lodgers.

Pilgrims were received in hospices built for the purpose, and were there served with reverence by the most distinguished persons in Venice; and if they chanced to arrive at the time of any solemn festival they were invited to join in the procession, walking on the right of the patricians with wax torches.

There was a special court for deciding questions between strangers, or between strangers and Venetians; and it was the duty of this tribunal to punish citizens who wronged any foreigner, or, if the latter was proved to be the offender, to expel him from the city. Moreover, an express law of 1317 required that the judges should 'gently instruct' persons who did not present their passports in order, instead of sending them away roughly or imposing a fine for an irregularity arising from ignorance of the Venetian law.

Mut. Commercio.

When any very noble guest was in Venice, the State spared nothing that could make his visit memor-

able to him as a time of wonder and delight. The Duke of Austria never forgot the reception he met with, at a time when he had little expectation of being so hospitably treated, for the relations between the Duke and the Republic had been strained during some time past. One of the Duke's great vassals, the lord of Sench, who was devoted to the king of Hungary, had stopped and imprisoned three Venetian senators when they were on their way to the court of the Emperor Charles IV. to request, in the name of the Republic, the investiture of certain lands to which the king of Hungary laid claim. The Duke of Austria had at first tolerated this high-handed act, but had at last yielded to the reiterated instances of the Republic, delivered the prisoners, and sent word that he would bring them to Venice himself.

Though surprised, and a little uneasy at this proposal, the Council determined to receive him with lavish hospitality, and several senators were sent to Treviso with richly-adorned vessels to meet him. He embarked, accordingly, with the restored captives, thirty knights, and a train of two hundred young nobles and squires. Not far from Venice he was met by the Doge with the famous barge, the Bucentaur, and the two sovereigns met with every demonstration of friendship. The noble Austrians were lodged at the charge of the State in the Dandolo and Ziani palaces on the Grand Canal, and so magnificent were the entertainments offered them that the expenses of their visit—for Venice always knew precisely what she was spending—amounted to ten

thousand ducats—say, seven or eight thousand pounds sterling, when money was worth three times what it is now.

My chronicler remarks that the money was well



RIO S. AGOSTIN

invested, as the Duke was made a firm friend of the Republic, and himself proposed a treaty by which he abandoned his claims to Trieste for seventy-five thousand ducats—about fifty-six thousand pounds.

In the latter part of the fourteenth century Petrarch was received with a hospitality as open-handed, and much less interested. The great poet and famous ambassador was treated like a king; the palace of the Quattro Torri on the Grand Canal was fitted up for him and placed at his disposal for as long a time as he would stay in Venice, and at every public function or festivity he appeared on the right hand of the Doge.

Touched by such consideration, Petrarch bequeathed a part of his priceless library to the Republic, and Venice, on her side, refusing to be outdone in generosity, presented him as a gift with the palace in which he had been living.

The palace had originally belonged to the Molina family, and ultimately became a religious house under the Sisters of the Holy Sepulchre. As for the poet's books, they came to a melancholy end. They are sometimes said to have been the beginning of the library of Saint Mark. The authority from which I quote says that amongst them were a manuscript of Homer, given to Petrarch by Nicolas Sigeros, ambassador of the Emperor of the East, a beautiful copy of Sophocles, a translation of the whole of the *Iliad* and of a part of the *Odyssey*, copied by Boccaccio himself, he having learned Greek from the translator, Leontio Pilato, an imperfect Quinctilian, and most of the works of Cicero transcribed by Petrarch himself. Such treasures would make even a modern millionaire look grave; yet it is said that when the celebrated Tomasini asked to be allowed to see the books towards the end of the seventeenth

century, he found them stowed away in an attic under the roof of Saint Mark's, 'partly reduced to dust, partly petrified'—'in saxa mutatos'—a phenomenon of which I never heard, and which I am at a loss to explain. ..

The tendency of Anglo-Saxons to extol and help conspiracy against every government but their own has led Englishmen to waste sympathy on Bocconio and Tiepolo, of whom it is now time to speak. The system of laws and government which became defined after the closure of the Great Council, though it already existed in great part so far as practice was concerned, was designed to check every impulse of personal political ambition in all classes of Venetians, beginning with the Doge himself. Indeed his life, both public and private, was so hampered and hedged in that his position at ordinary times seems to us far from enviable. Yet in spite of this, and it is a singular reflection, it was quite possible for a great man like Enrico Dandolo or Andrea Contarini to exercise tremendous personal influence at decisive moments and to perform acts of the highest heroism. Is there anything more heroic in all romantic history than the aged Dandolo kneeling to receive the cross of the crusader, and then leading a great allied host to one of the most astounding conquests ever recorded? Was ever a man more of a hero than old Contarini, swearing on his sword, when all seemed lost at Chioggia, that he would never go back to Venice till the enemy was beaten—and gloriously keeping his word? It seems to me that the heroism of both those men grows when one considers

that if either of them had been even suspected of any personal interest or ambitious design he would have been ruthlessly put out of the way by the men who had elected him.

The whole system was created to make anything like self-aggrandisement impossible, and it worked so infallibly that during something near six hundred years not one attempt to break it down was successful; and when at last it fell, in its extreme old age, of weakness and corruption, it was not finally destroyed by any inherent defect except old age, when it was attacked by the greatest conqueror since Charlemagne.

It may not be possible to bring it under any philosophical theory, and it bore but a small resemblance to Plato's ideal State; but it had the merit of being the most practical plan ever tested for maintaining the balance between public and private forces, public welfare and private wealth, national dignity and individual social importance. Of the three great conspiracies only one was the work of an ambitious aristocrat; another was a disappointed rich burgher's ineffectual effort at revenge; the third was headed by the Doge himself, partly out of private resentment. None of them had any great chance of success, yet so great was the apprehension they created that they were the source and origin of all that terrible machinery of secret tribunals, spies, anonymous accusations, and private executions which darken the later history of Venice; a machinery which was almost always at work against the very nobles who had constructed it, who feared it, but who never

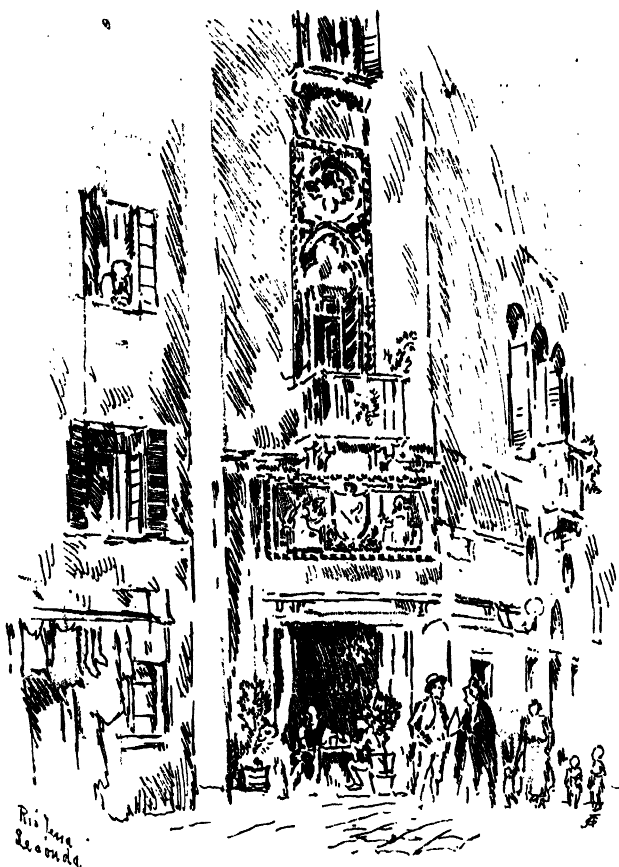
even thought of doing away with it, though they could have voted it out of existence at any meeting of their Council; a machinery which hardly affected the masses of the people at all, and which powerfully protected the merchant burghers, but at the mere mention of which the greatest noble became silent and looked grave.

Elsewhere in Italy the nobles of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, iron-clad, hard-riding, and hard-hitting, were the natural enemies of the people, whom they could kill like flies when they liked. In sea-girt Venice they wore no armour, the people mostly loved them, and the burghers needed their protection and shared in all the sources of their wealth. The nobles' only possible enemies at home were among themselves.

History has not left a very clear account of the conspiracy of Marin Bocconio against the aristocratic Republic in 1300. We know that he was a man who had a great following, chiefly on account of his immense wealth, and Romanin remarks that his intelligence was not equal to the arduous undertaking he had planned. We know that on the discovery of the plot he was taken, that he was first confined in the prison of the ducal palace, and afterwards hanged with ten of his principal accomplices between the two columns, probably those of the Piazzetta, and we have a list of those executed, showing that none of them were noble; but a few noble names appear among those of persons exiled as having been favourable to a revolution. Bocconio was certainly one of those malcontents who

Rom. iii. 5.

were not satisfied with the position and privileges of a



RIO JENA SECONDA

Venetian burgher, and he was desirous of opening himself a way into the Great Council by means of his

fortune. The story that he knocked at the door of the council chamber with the hilt of his sword, and armed to the teeth, is an empty fable. He plotted, like the other conspirators, in the dark, and he was betrayed by an accomplice.

The facts as well as the details of the conspiracy of the Tiepolo and the Quirini are better known, and it was this attempt at revolution which first gave the government of the Republic that suspicious and inquisitorial character which it never afterwards wholly lost. Mention has already been made of that popular move- *Rom. ii. 323.* ment in 1296, which attempted to seat upon the ducal throne Jacopo Tiepolo, son of the former Doge Lorenzo, a man distinguished in the career of arms, and who was therefore thought fit to take charge of affairs at the beginning of the great struggle with Genoa. It will be remembered that the Government opposed the popular choice, partly in order not to yield an inch to the popular demand, but also, on the other hand, because it was already suspected that the Tiepolo family, which had previously given Venice two doges, was desirous of making that dignity hereditary.

The Doge chosen by the Government was Gradenigo, and against him the Tiepolo family and their friends, such as the Quirini, the Badoer, and the Doro, continued afterwards to nourish resentment, and showed themselves sternly opposed to the law of the closure of the Great Council, which they looked upon as the triumph of Gradenigo's policy. The Tiepolo were very numerous, and so also were the Quirini. They

possessed many houses, were provided with vast stores of arms, and had many servants and slaves. The two families were not united by friendship only, for Bajamonte Tiepolo had married a daughter of the Quirini. Her father, Marco, was of that branch which inhabited the palace situated on the island of Rialto, in a little square beyond the Ruga degli Speziali.

Both families belonged by right to the Great Council, and during its meetings they took advantage of the smallest incidents to give vent to their wrath against the Doge and his policy. Sometimes they raised such tumults during the sittings that the meetings had to be adjourned, and on the following days they fanned the embers of disturbance into flame in the public streets. The Government showed its anxiety by renewing the prohibition to wear arms abroad, and the greatest vigilance was exercised by the 'Lords of the Night,' who were six magistrates, generally nobles, charged with the duty of superintendents of police in the city after dark, and were in command of the armed watch. Orders were issued that no one was to keep fire burning, except in barbers' shops, after the ringing of the third hour of the night, *i.e.* three and a half hours after sunset. At that time the streets were only lighted by means of lamps that burned here and there before shrines set up by pious persons, but the Government now greatly increased this illumination. In a word, every precaution was taken lest the discontent fostered by the great families should suddenly break out into open revolt.

One evening the brother of Marco Quirini, Pietro surnamed 'Pizzagallo,' was met in the street by Marco Morosini, one of the Lords of the Night, who was going his rounds. The magistrate's suspicions were at once aroused; he stopped Quirini, and insisted upon searching him to see whether he were armed or not. Pietro Quirini, by way of showing his displeasure at what he considered an offence, promptly kicked Morosini off his feet, and left him lying on the ground. An action was of course brought against the offender, who was condemned to pay a heavy fine for his irascibility in thus gravely insulting an officer of the State. Nevertheless a number of similar incidents took place, for prudence was not among the virtues of the Quirini and Tiepolo families, and they appear to have given themselves infinite trouble in seeking occasions for disturbing the public peace. Nor was it difficult at that time to stir up the elements of discord, for Venice was involved in a disastrous war with the lords of Ferrara, a conflict which we must now briefly explain.

In the eleventh century, during the War of the Investitures, the Church under Gregory VII., Hildebrand, made common cause with the party of Italian independence against the German Empire, and was vigorously sustained by Matilda, Countess of Tuscany. She, on her side, naturally found allies among those powers which desired to obtain the goodwill of the Holy See. When the Countess wished to get back Ferrara, which she had lost some years previously, the Venetians lent their help, both with vessels and with

armed forces; and in return they obtained many privileges for their commerce in the city of Ferrara, and, among others, that of placing there a 'Visdomino,' a sort of consul-general, to watch their interests.

It will be remembered that the Countess Matilda left all her vast estates to the Church. Ferrara, therefore, remained under the supremacy of the Holy See, and when the city was seized by *Rom. ii. 19.* the Ghibelline Salinguerra the Venetians drove him out, and the city came under the domination of the family of Este, with the consent of the Pope. By the end of the thirteenth century this family had already reached such a high position that the Marquis Azzone had married the daughter of Charles II., king of Naples. Venice remained on excellent terms with this *Rom. iii. 12.* Marquis Azzone, and constantly lent him assistance in his struggles with his neighbours who threatened his liberty. He, however, fell dangerously ill in the year 1307, and Venice, being well aware of the discord which was brewing between his sons, seized the opportunity of furthering her own interests. During his illness three Venetian envoys remained constantly at Ferrara on pretence of sending information regarding the health of the sick man, but in reality to watch the condition of affairs and the disposition of the people. The old prince died, and left a will so worded that one of his illegitimate sons, named Fresco, attempted to have his own son, Folco, proclaimed lord of Ferrara, and to this end asked help of Venice. Azzone's two legitimate sons, Francesco and Aldobrandino, however, turned to the

Pope and obtained his support, renewing their oaths of allegiance as feudatories of the Church.

A hot contest now ensued, and Fresco, realising the weakness of his own cause, made over his rights, such as they were, to Venice. The troops of the Pope and of the Marquis Francesco now entered Ferrara, and the city was declared under the dominion of the Pope in 1308. But Venice protested, and refused to surrender the fortresses she had taken over from Fresco. It was in vain that the Pope attempted every means of conciliation. The Republic had long coveted Ferrara as a possession, and now refused to give up the part of the principality which she held, or her claim to the rest.

Rom. iii. 20.

The negotiations therefore came to grief, and ended in a solemn Bull of Excommunication against the Doge, his counsellors, all the citizens of Venice, and all persons whatsoever who had helped them; declaring, further, that Venice was dispossessed of all she held in the principality of Ferrara and elsewhere; all men were forbidden to engage in commerce with her; all men were permitted thenceforth to make slaves of Venetians—if they could; the wills of all Venetians were declared null and void; and all clergy were ordered to quit the Venetian territories ten days after the expiration of the thirty days which were allowed the Republic to consider whether she would repent or not.

Venice, however, obstinately resisted; and in this place it should be noted that the Venetians, though very devout, and always ready to decree new festivities in honour of their saints, besides being extremely

generous in building churches and endowing religious institutions, continuously showed themselves averse to all intervention of the Church where their political or material interests were concerned. Though they respected the clergy, the latter never had any privileges in Venice beyond those of ordinary citizens, and both priests and monks were constrained to mount guard at night, and to appear before civil tribunals in civil suits, like ordinary citizens.

Venice was still under the papal excommunication when the quarrel between the Quirini and the followers of the Doge Gradenigo had reached its climax, and when the anti-papal party, which we may fairly call the Ghibellines, and which had the support of the Doge, overcame the resistance of its opponents. Marco Quirini determined to take advantage of the discontent of the greater part of the citizens in order to set on foot an immense conspiracy. He was indeed the soul of this attempt, but his son-in-law, Bajamonte Tiepolo, was the visible mover in it, for he was beloved by the people, who called him the 'Great Cavalier'; and he was inspired by a profound hatred of the person of the Doge, who, according to him, had usurped the dignity which had been conferred upon the Tiepolo by the will of the people.

Friends of the two great families began to meet in the Cà Grande, which was the palace of the Quirini. Marco made a speech, which to modern democrats might seem a model of justice and patriotism, in which he did not fail to prove that he was not impelled to

take arms against the head of the Republic by any motive of personal grudge or private ambition, but that he was driven to extremities by the unwise policy of the Government and the extremely unjust laws which were being promulgated to the destruction of the public liberties. A sort of report of this speech is still preserved in the library of Saint Mark.

Tiepolo, at once more frank and more persuasive, replied to the words of his father-in-law, explaining clearly that it was their joint design to give the Republic a doge acceptable to the people and capable of restoring to the latter their original and ancient rights. It is possible that the meeting might have determined to take arms openly at once, if old Jacopo, another of the Quirini, a man of wise counsel and of little personal ambition, had not replied to these first two speeches by attempting to persuade his hearers that they ought to desist from what was a criminal attempt, and from bringing about the calamities of bloodshed. This Jacopo was about to leave Venice as ambassador to Constantinople. The conspirators, who respected him, but had not the slightest intention of accepting his advice, pretended to yield, putting off the moment for action until after his departure. When he had left the city they made every arrangement for carrying out their revolutionary plans at dawn on Sunday, June 14, 1310.

During the night the conspirators were to meet in the Cà Grande in small detachments. In the palace arms sufficient for all were hidden, with a flag upon

which was inscribed the word 'Liberty.' Marco Quirini and his sons, Niccolò and Benedetto, were to go to Saint Mark's by the Calle dei Fabbri and the Bridge dei Dai, with a number of armed men; the other conspirators were to enter the Piazza from the Merceria, under the leadership of Bajamonte. For some time past Badoero Badoer had been in Padua and its neighbourhood gathering a desperate band, and on the appointed day he and his men were to be ready at the palace of the Quirini. The plan was boldly conceived, and there was no small likelihood of its success. But one of the conspirators, a burgher named Marco Donà, lost courage at the last, or suffered himself to be seduced by promises of rich reward from the Doge, including his admission to the nobility. Early in the night he entered Gradenigo's apartment, and revealed everything to him. The Doge did not lose his presence of mind for an instant, but gathered round him his counsellors, the Lords of the Night, the heads of the Forty, and all his friends; every man then quietly armed his servants, thereby gathering together a large number of defenders. At no great distance from the palace was the Arsenal, where there were a great number of artisans of every kind employed in the construction of ships, and these men, both from their intelligence and honesty, represented the pick of the Venetian lower class. They composed the bodyguard of the Doge, and had the right to assist at all public ceremonies, their chiefs having the privilege of entering the palace freely. These men slept in the shipyard by turns, and were

always ready at the call of their 'provveditori,' who were three nobles elected at intervals of thirty-two months for the direction and administration of the



CALLE DEL SPEZIER

Arsenal. With such forces at his command, it is perhaps not surprising that the Doge was not intimidated by the conspiracy. As soon as he was assured of being defended by his servants and the workmen, he

sent messages to the Mayors of Chioggia, Torcello, and Murano, with orders to arrest the conspirators who were to enter Venice under the guidance of Badoer. At the same time the members of the School of Charity and many of the guild of painters took arms to watch the entrance to the Piazza.

Meanwhile the conspirators made their way through a tempest of rain and wind to the Quirini palace, and arms were distributed to them; Badoer, however, did not come, and his absence was attributed by his friends to the storm. Without waiting for him they went out at dawn, during a terrific thunderstorm, crying 'Death to the Doge Gradenigo!' The Quirini, following the direction agreed upon, came out at Saint Mark's by the Bridge dei Dai, which thereafter received the name of 'Ponte del Malpasso' (the Bridge of Evil Crossing). But instead of finding the Square deserted, as they had expected, they were assailed by a strong contingent of armed men. Marco and his son Benedetto were soon killed; the other son, Niccolò, was wounded, and he probably obtained on that day the surname of 'the Lame,' which he ever afterwards bore. The remaining conspirators now scattered, to meet again soon afterwards in the Square of Saint Luke, where they were again defeated by the guild of painters. Meanwhile Bajamonte was coming down towards Saint Mark's from the Merceria, and in order to gather his followers together, he halted at the knot of elder-trees, where it was the custom to tie up the horses of the councillors on the days of assembling. Here, by chance or by

intention, a woman of the people, who lived in a little house overlooking the trees, dropped from her window a stone mortar, or the stone of a hand-mill, which killed Bajamonte's standard-bearer. The banner inscribed with the word 'Liberty' was dashed to the ground, and Tiepolo's men fell into such confusion that he had great difficulty in taking them back to the island of Rialto, burning behind him the bridge which connected the island with the rest of the city. A regular siege now followed, the insurgents defending themselves with the courage of despair; and they might even then have been victorious if Badoer had been able to reach Venice and to take the Doge's forces in the flank, but Badoer, with a great number of his rebellious companions, had been taken and thrown into prison early in the morning, having been caught on his way to Venice by the Mayor of Chioggia, who was a Giustiniani. Tiepolo now held his own upon the island of Rialto, where he had entrenched himself; but the Doge, in order not to prolong the bloodshed of a conflict between citizens, wished to prevail by some gentler means, and promised all the rebels their lives, provided they would submit, throw down their arms, and quit the territory of the Republic. The negotiations were first attempted by some Milanese merchants, and then by Giovanni Soranzo, who, as the father-in-law of Niccolò Quirini, the latter having married his daughter Soranza, seemed to have a better chance of being heard; but it was in vain. Tiepolo continued to resist with mad obstinacy, and preferred anything rather than submission; until

at last one of the counsellors of the Doge, a certain Filippo Belegno, succeeded in bringing about an understanding. Tiepolo consented to retire from the island of Rialto, and to go into an exile which was to last four years 'in the Slavonic countries beyond the island of Zara,' but not in any country that was hostile to Venice; his noble followers were also to be exiled during four years, and might reside in any part of Italy that was outside the Venetian territories, but not within the territories of Padua, Treviso, or Vicenza. They were informed that if they were found beyond the limits to which they were assigned they should pay for the indiscretion with their lives. By a decree of the Great Council their wives were ordered to follow them into exile, and were instructed to leave Venice within eight days. The other conspirators, *i.e.* the servants of the nobles, and those who were considered less responsible, were pardoned on condition that they would submit and lead quiet lives. Thus of all those who had taken part in the revolutionary movement, only Badoer and his friends were in the hands of justice on the evening of the fatal day. When, according to the custom of the times, they had confessed their crime under torture, Badoer was beheaded, and the rest were all hanged between the columns. One-third of the Quirini family property having been claimed by Giovanni, who had taken no part in the conspiracy, the remaining two-thirds of the Quirini palace on the Rialto were demolished, the share in the Cà Grande being allowed to stand which had been Giovanni's; but lest it

should remind posterity of the greatness of the family, the Republic bought out his third part and turned it into a place for raising and killing poultry.

It is a singular circumstance, but quite authentically recorded, that the Government was just then without sufficient funds to pay Giovanni for his share in the house, and it was actually proposed to pawn the city's silver trumpets, which were used in all public solemnities. The Government, however, succeeded in raising the sum in a more dignified way.

The house of Bajamonte Tiepolo, at Sant' Agostino, was levelled to the ground, and on the spot a column recorded the traitor's infamy. This space is still open and desolate in our own time, after a lapse of six hundred years.

Lazzari Guida, 171.

The column was set up in 1314, and it bore the following inscription, which is one of the most ancient specimens of Venetian dialect. It is in the form of a rhymed quatrain: 'This ground belonged to Bajamonte, and now for his infamous treachery it has been turned common, that all may look upon it now and ever, and be afraid.'

It is not long since writers of democratic tendency still attempted to make Tiepolo seem a martyr to liberty. The Provisional Government of Venice, on July 13, 1797, invited the citizens to restore to honour the memory of those heroes, born in times of tyranny, who had fallen victims to their own generous efforts, and much more in the same manner. It was proposed to set

Cecchetti, Dubbii.

up a statue to Tiepolo, as well as to the proto-martyr, Marin Bocconio; but in the end, even the democratic Government was obliged to concede that its hero had been nothing but a seditious egotist, and the name of Bajamonte has not lost the odium it deserves even to our own time; for in spite of his standard blazoned with the word 'Liberty,' he had really meant to seize the government of his country and to make the dogeship hereditary in his family. After the conspiracy the public feeling against the Tiepolo and Quirini families was so strong that those branches of the Tiepolo which had remained faithful to the Republic changed their coats-of-arms. The innocent branches of the Quirini, however, resorted to an expedient which is quite unique in heraldry, so far as I know. In Italian 'bono' means 'good'; the Quirini simply charged their coat with a capital B, to show how good they had been!

Rom. iii. 39, note 2.

Marco Donà, the man who had revealed the plot, was rewarded by being admitted to the Great Council, and his name was inscribed in the 'Golden Book,' making the honour hereditary. The woman who had killed Bajamonte's standard-bearer, and whose name was Rossi, on being asked what reward she would prefer, requested to be allowed to fly the standard of Saint Mark from her window on the day of Saint Vitus (June 15), and on the other solemn festivals of the year; and that neither she nor her descendants should ever be required to pay a higher rent for the house in which she lived, and which belonged to the patrimony

of the Basilica of Saint Mark. There exists under date of the year 1468 the protest of a certain Rossi, her descendant, whose rent had been raised from fifteen ducats to twenty-eight. He won his case. The house is called in our own time the 'House of the Miracle of the Mortar.' It is in the Merceria, at the corner of the Calle del Cappello. The standard which Lucia Rossi used to display at her window is preserved in the Correr Museum.

Fulin, Arch. Ven. (1876), and Soranza Soranzo.

Molmenti, Dogaressa.

The Rector of the guild of painters also received special honours, as well as the brethren of the Carità, who had lent armed assistance.

One might be surprised at the lenity with which the Republic judged the ringleaders of the Tiepolo-Quirini conspiracy; but it must not be forgotten that the conspirators, entrenched on the Rialto, were beyond the Doge's power, and still threatened the safety of the city and of the Republic, which was no doubt glad to be rid of them at any price. Moreover, we have record of a pitiful episode, which shows that the Venetian Government could be severe to cruelty without necessarily employing the executioner.

Among the nobles who went into exile beyond Zara after the affair at Rialto was Niccolò Quirini, Marco's son, surnamed 'the Lame.' His wife, who was, as we have said, the daughter of Giovanni Soranzo, joined him in his exile. At the end of four years, says Molmenti, she felt an irresistible longing to see her family again, and asked permission to return home, but

it was not granted to her. Her father, however, had been made Doge in 1311, and she began the journey, trusting to his influence. No sooner had she reached Venice than she was arrested and condemned to perpetual confinement in the convent of Sta. Maria delle Vergini, in one of the most distant districts of the city.

In connection with this story it should be noted that the convent in which she was imprisoned was not one of cloistered nuns. Until the end of the fifteenth century they bore the title of 'canonesses'; they were under the government of an abbess, but took no solemn vows, wore no veils, and could even leave the convent and marry. The convent itself was under a sort of tutelage of the Doge. It had been founded and endowed at the beginning of the thirteenth century by the Doge Pietro Ziani, together with a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and became the common residence of many noble ladies, and of many noble girls who were educated there. The Doge conferred the investiture upon the abbess, according to the custom of those times, by means of a golden ring, and once a year he went to visit the convent. This was in the month of May; and after hearing mass the Doge went into the parlour, where the abbess received him, being dressed in a magnificent white mantle, with two veils upon her head, one white and the other black. She presented the Doge with a small bunch of flowers, set in a golden handle, for which the Doge expressed his thanks in a set form. The Doge Soranzo must have

Galliccioli, vi. 58.

Giustina Renier Michiel, Origini, ii. 73.

gone through this function many times while his own daughter was a prisoner in the nunnery, and not allowed to assist in the ceremony. The old building of the Vergini was destroyed by fire in 1375, but was restored with greater splendour than before as a place for educating noble Venetian girls.

It must not be supposed that the convent had barred windows, nor that there were gratings at the parlour door, from behind which the novice never returned again to the outer world. Gratings and bars and the strict cloister were not introduced into the rules of Italian nuns until much later, when the Church was obliged to check the grave abuses which had gradually crept into convent life. In the time of Soranza, and particularly in the convent of the Vergini, there was much freedom, and any reasonable excuse was admitted for allowing the canonesses to go out into the city; they not infrequently visited their relations, and even stopped with them in the country.

Soranza had been placed in custody in a little house that was built against the wall of the convent; its door had two different keys, one of which was given to the abbess, and the other to the housekeeper sister, so that the two were obliged to enter together, and while guarding their prisoner they watched each other. Soranza was allowed one woman servant, who was allowed to go out in order to wash linen, but she was warned that she would be condemned to a heavy fine if the smallest bit of writing were ever found upon her.

Four years Soranza languished uncomplaining in her

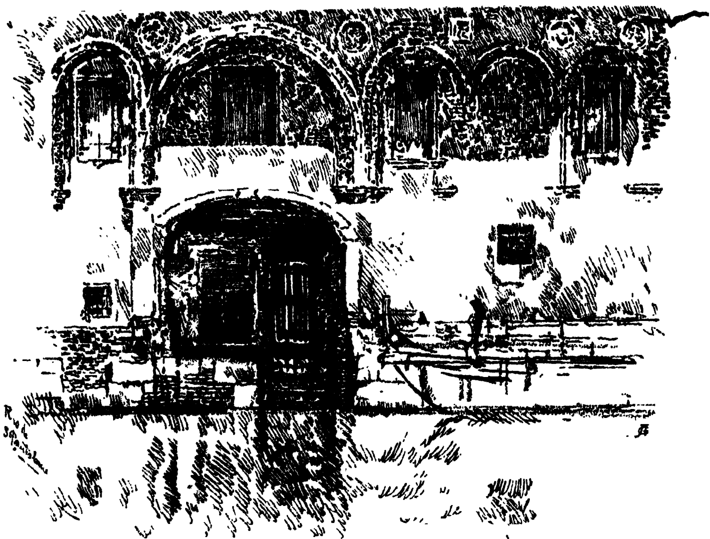
narrow dwelling. Then she appealed to the Council of Ten for permission to walk in the convent garden. The Council allowed her this liberty for only four months. Fearing that it would not be continued to her she wrote again before the term expired, to beg that it might be extended, representing that she could not live without a little air; and the Council made the permission permanent.

At last it was known that Niccolò was dead, stabbed by an unknown hand, and Soranza was a widow; nevertheless, for the sake of the name she yet bore, the Republic still treated her as a prisoner. Amongst the archives of the Council of Ten are found more than sixty documents concerning her, and there are letters from her entreating to be allowed to visit her father, the Doge, at the ducal palace, or to go and take care of a sick friend. Sometimes she obtained what she asked, sometimes the most innocent indulgences were refused her, and it is clear that the Republic did not mean her to think that she could have anything otherwise than as a special favour.

When Soranza breathed her last in the little house that had been her prison, she had occupied it for twenty-five years. During the last ten years, however, the wife of Andreolo Quirini was confined with her.

She was not the last of those unhappy ladies who had been exiled with their husbands. In 1320 a man called Riccio arrived in Venice, bringing the head of Pietro Quirini who had been treacherously assassinated by an 'unknown' hand—possibly the hand of Riccio

himself, who brought the victim's head in order to claim his fee. Pietro left a widow, still young, who at once asked permission to come home to Venice. She was told plainly that if she had no children and expected none she might return, but that otherwise she must remain in exile 'at the disposal of the Ten.'



RIO DI S. PANTOLEONE

In the following year another Niccolò Quirini died abroad, and his widow was allowed to return on condition of living in a convent, never to go out without permission of the Council of Ten. She had in Venice a devoted admirer, one Angelo Bembo, who obtained permission to have her placed in the convent of Santa Maria di Valverde, on the island of Mazzorbo, a lovely

and retired spot, where seclusion would be more bearable than in the city. The young widow seems to have made good use of her stay there, for the papers in the archives of the Ten which concern her contain the information that she soon afterwards married her friend, and was allowed to return to the world. She had recovered all her liberty by the mere change of name.

As some justification for this excessive rigour on the part of the Government, it should be remembered that the exiled Tiepolo and Quirini families had never ceased to plot against the Republic after their defeat, both in the countries where they were allowed to live and in Venice itself by means of agents. A letter of the Council of Ten confers upon Federigo Dandolo and Marin Falier full powers to get rid of the obnoxious Bajamonte, in any way they might, for the good of the country. The note is dated in 1328. From that time forward his name was never pronounced in Council, nor mentioned in any document; and it may be supposed that he, like Niccolò Quirini, came to his end, murdered by some emissary of the Republic. The fact that we find no allusion in the subsequent history of Marin Falier to the part he possibly played in that side tragedy is not evidence that he failed to carry out his instructions.

A careful examination of early documents seems to show that the Council of Ten existed before the Tiepolo-Quirini conspiracy, which is generally held to be the circumstance which called it into existence. It is certain, however,

Armand Baschet, Archives, 514.

that in earlier times the Council had not such great *Rom. iii. 39 sqq., 52.* importance, and it was always more or less a temporary affair until the year 1335. Ten magistrates, who were called together on the occasion of the conspiracy to form a sort of court-martial, gave their judgments, but by no means in an arbitrary manner. They were elected for a period not much longer than three months, which was to expire on Saint Michael's Day, September 29, a day always kept as a great festival in Venice. But when that date was reached, it appeared necessary to prolong the time of their power, as their task was not yet finished; for it consisted not only in punishing the guilty, but also in closely watching the immediate consequences of the conspiracy. The same extension was granted again and again, until the following year, when it was determined to establish the tribunal for a term of five years, appointing its members anew, however, on every successive Saint Michael's Day. These five years being passed, a further decree prolonged the tribunal's existence ten years more, and so on. Finally, in 1335, it was decreed to be permanent, under an extremely strict code of rules called the 'Rite,' well devised for a body which was to treat of the very important affairs that came before it. On election, every member of the *A. Baschet, Archives, 531.* Ten took an oath, which included the following clauses: 'I, as one of the Council of Ten, do swear upon the holy Gospels of God to act for the advantage and honour of Venice; and in good faith and conscience to advise our Lord the Doge and his



Joseph Pennell Del. Ponte Venete Marina Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

counsellors such things as I shall believe useful to the honour and preservation of our country; and I swear to obey our Lord the Doge, and to do what the heads of the Ten shall command me. . . . I bind myself to keep secret whatever is said or commanded to me concerning all matters which may be proposed by the said Council, communicated or discussed in the sittings, and concerning any letters or reports which may be communicated to us, etc. etc.'

The ordinary meetings of the Ten were held by day in the ducal palace; not in a room hung with black and feebly lighted, as some have written and believed, but in a hall appointed for that purpose by the Doge, until one should be properly furnished and decorated for the tribunal. Under extraordinary circumstances the Council also met by night. All sittings began with an invocation to the Holy Spirit. These sittings were never attended by the Ten only; from the time of the institution of the tribunal, the Doge and his counsellors, Avogador of the commonwealth and the High Chancellor, who, it should be remembered, was not a noble, were also obliged to be present. The imagination of posterity, amused by fantastic tales which have no historic basis, has lent this tribunal a character of mystery and arbitrary authority which it never possessed, as is proved by documents still in existence. In all trials, after the accusation had been read, the defence was heard immediately, and when the defendant was not able to conduct his own case, a law of 1443 allowed him to be represented by a

Rom. iii. 35 sqq.

lawyer. The avogador put the following question to the Ten: 'According to what has been read and said, is it your opinion that the accused should be condemned?' Sometimes the following question was asked: 'Is it your opinion that the accused, in consequence of what has been already heard, should be put to the torture, in order to obtain from him the whole truth, and further details; or that the court should proceed, as having already sufficient proof of his guilt?' The Council of Ten could not impose fines; their sentences necessarily affected the body of the condemned person. When a vote had decided that the accused was convicted, each member of the Council could propose the punishment which he thought fit, but it was not usual to propose any more severe penalty than that asked for by the avogador. He was the first to make the proposition, then came the heads of the Ten, then the Doge's counsellors, and last of all the Doge himself. Each proposal was balloted for, every member of the Council retaining the right to propose a diminution or commutation of the sentence, or to ask for a new trial.

Rom. iii. 66, 68.

We know that the Council of Ten had a fund for secret service ever since the fourteenth century. It also possessed a small armoury.

It cannot be denied that on more than one occasion the execution of the verdicts of the Ten was performed quickly and in a secret manner; yet it does not appear that this was done because the sentence had been passed from any motive of private hatred or vengeance; but

only because prudence required that the public should not be allowed to express an opinion on the matter. It may be remarked that in European countries the procedure nowadays is often similar in courts-martial. If we take away the right of torture, the violet cloaks and hoods of the seven, and the red hoods of the three chiefs—in a word, if we erase from the picture the mediæval setting of the Council of Ten which looks theatrical to us, we may find that after all there is not such grave cause for accusing the famous Venetian tribunal of arbitrary cruelty. The proceedings of a military court-martial in our own times are often quite as secret and expeditious, and much more summary.

The manner in which the members of the Council were elected shows clearly enough that the abuse of authority was always feared on their part. In the year 1310 it was decreed that no two persons who were relatives might sit together in the Council, and that when a relative of any member was to be tried, that member should be excluded from the sitting. The members soon ceased to be elected on Saint Michael's Day; and in order that greater prudence might be exercised in choosing them, they were elected one at a time at the meetings of the Great Council as each one's term expired. Until 1356, when a place was to be filled, two candidates were proposed, and sometimes there were even three nominations. No member of the Council of Ten might receive gifts under pain of immediate death, nor was any salary attached to the office. At the end of their term they went back into private life, and were

not protected in any way from such accusations as might be brought against them for their actions during their administration.

Nearly fifty years after the date of the Tiepolo-Quirini conspiracy, August 9, 1356, a number of rules were introduced, to increase the severity with which the powers of the Council of Ten might be exercised, and at the same time to ensure justice in their dealings with criminal cases. It is amply proved by documents of the fourteenth century that in the majority of cases, though possibly in those which were considered of minor importance, there was neither mystery nor secrecy about the meetings of the Ten, and that, on the contrary, the door of their place of meeting was sometimes open to the public. No other meaning can be attached to the law of 1575, which was passed in order to limit the too great facility of ingress to the hall of their meetings, on the ground that the proceedings might be prejudiced by too much publicity, as they were constantly interrupted by the persons present, so that practically any one might watch the trials, as Romanin says, even in cases of the highest importance. There was never at any time the least tendency to diminish the legal character of the tribunal in order to confer upon it an arbitrary power, since it disposed of weapons so powerful as to place it above the need of intrigue. As has been said, although the Ten were all chosen from the nobility, the High Chancellor was present at the sittings, albeit he had no right of voting, and his presence alone sufficed to remind the councillors that

Rom. iii. 57.

the citizens, whose chief representative he was, were all witnesses of whatsoever the Ten accomplished. On the whole, M. Baschet is right in saying that the Council's activity was chiefly exercised against the nobles themselves for the protection of the people.

It undoubtedly disposed of great powers, and no one could expect a tribunal to be infallible in those times, or perhaps in any other; but though the Ten were no doubt sometimes guilty of grave mistakes, they were never at any time the instrument of a tyrannical government for oppressing the poor and innocent.

Rom. iii. 54, note 3.

They elected three heads every month, whose duty it was to conduct the affairs of the Council, to study the cases it was to try, and to see to the execution of its judgments. The Council had under its immediate control the executives of its justice, which consisted of a large force of police, controlled by six principal officers, and by the so-called 'Missier Grande,' who was the head of the whole body.

A. Baschet, Archives, 536. Rom. ii. 359.

The criminal and political prisons were under the special supervision of the Doge himself during the first half of the fourteenth century, and it was the duty of two of his counsellors to visit them once every month, and to make inquiry of the prisoners confined there concerning their wants and wishes. During the second half of the century this supervision and the duty of visiting became a part of the office of the heads of the Ten. I shall attempt to

Rom. ii. 359.

describe in passing the state of the prisons in which criminals and persons accused of grave crimes were confined in the fourteenth century, these only having been under the supervision of the Ten.

In the first place, there were certain narrow but not unhealthy prisons in the tower which formerly existed at the east end of the ducal palace, and these were on the same floor as the hall where the Council of Ten met, and were called the 'upper' prisons. Accused persons were generally kept here during their trial. In 1321 an order was issued for the construction of the so-called 'lower' prisons, which the common people afterwards called 'pozzi,' wells; and these were undoubtedly hideous and narrow cells, though probably not worse than those in use at that time in other countries. They are not below the level of the ground, or rather of the water, as novelists have described them; but the fact that criminals descended to them from the hall of the tribunal by means of a little staircase less than a yard wide, which soon became quite dark, and the sound of the lapping water outside, helped to give the prisoner the impression that he was being taken down alive into a tomb dug deep in the earth, although he was actually on the level of the courtyard. A small door in the wall of the courtyard was opened in 1407, in order that the family of Vittor Pisani might enter the prison when he was lying there ill, and it was afterwards closed at his expense. On the side of the canal was a

Rom. iii. 74.

Mutinelli, Less.

Rom. iii. 77.

corridor, little more than a yard wide, and faced with marble, through which escape was impossible. Upon this opened the doors of certain very small cells, marked with Roman numerals, in which, for some reason now impossible to explain, the 'V' was always turned upside down. The cells were completely lined with deal, but received air only from the dark corridor through an aperture in the door about eight inches square. The prisons on the other side, towards the harbour, had various names, among which we may mention that of 'Mosina' and 'Liona'; then such names as 'The Refreshing Joy,' 'The Vulcan,' 'The Strong,' 'The Lightless,' and other similar epithets, probably suggested by the grim humour of the gaolers. Until 1357 the counsellers of the Doge went down into these places every month; and at that time the heads of the Ten inquired into the state of each individual prisoner, and gave an account thereof to the Doge and to the Council. There also the prisoner was allowed to speak, probably through the little aperture in the door, with his attorney, if he feared lest he should be unable to defend himself when called to justice. To this place came also at night the monk whose duty it was to comfort the last hours of such unfortunates as had received sentence of death, either by hanging between the columns of the Piazzetta, or, as frequently happened, at the place where the crime was committed, or in the cell, if the tribunal had decreed that the prisoner should be strangled. Sometimes, though more rarely, the sentence was this, 'that to night So-and-so

Rom. iii. 75.

be conducted to the Orfano Canal, with his hands tied behind his back and weights fastened to his body, and let him be drowned, and let him die.'

I shall have occasion to speak further of the prisons as they were in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.



THE ABBAZZIA

VIII

ON MANNERS AND CERTAIN CUSTOMS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

In the natural order of things it is now time to say a few words about the manners and customs of the Venetians in the fourteenth century. Owing to lack of documents the subject is by no means an easy one. An ideal history would be a careful account of the daily doings and habits of a nation, concisely told and not out of proportion with the greater events of which an account is due. Such a history would be a fascinating

tale, though it might be an almost interminable one. As in an endless gallery, the writer would show his readers an unbroken series of pictures, and the mind would be led without surprise, but without a moment's dulness or boredom, from the beginning to the end of a people's career.

Unhappily no such method can ever be even attempted where the remote past is concerned. The men and women of those times lived their own daily lives, found them not always interesting, and passed away without leaving us a single true record of twenty-four hours in the life of a man or a woman. Yet how intensely interesting even one such record would be! How the weary historian, seeking for the simple details of some simple life six hundred years ago, longs to discover a Horace Walpole, a Madame de Sévigné, or most of all a Paston family, amongst the yellow and dusty archives! Something, however, may still be got together to give an idea of what the non-political, non-historical Venice was in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

To begin with, though the Republic never showed much inclination to submit to any dictation from the popes, the Venetians were a practically religious people and extremely charitable. With the possible exceptions of Rome and Florence, no city of Italy possessed at that time so many hospices for the poor and hospitals for the sick; and considering the necessary limitations of all philanthropy at that early period, those institutions were managed and kept up with astonishing

intelligence and care. I have no intention of compiling a catalogue of the buildings in which old people, invalids, widows, and pilgrims found a temporary or a permanent refuge, as the case might be; but it is worth while to notice here and there the sensitive delicacy with which charity was often exercised, and which seems so little in harmony with the nature of the more important historical events of the period.

There is something very touching, for instance, in the origin of the Ca' di Dio—literally, 'The House of God,' as the old building is called to this day. In the year 1272, one of those pious souls that feel the true and natural intuitions of charity came across that saddest sort of misery which exists here and there in the world, hiding itself as far as possible from every eye, and preferring actual starvation and death to the humiliation of asking alms. These poor people were ladies of good birth, reduced to a condition in which they positively had neither a crust to eat nor a place to lay their heads. The charitable person who found them here and there gathered them at first into a refuge with other poor women, where they could at least live and die in peace, but, even in the simplicity of those days, he soon understood that it was moral torture for a starving patrician woman, or the widow of some high magistrate of the Republic, to share bed and board with the poor widows of sailors, fishermen, and artisans, and he created for them, out of sheer delicacy and kindness of heart, a separate refuge in the Ca' di Dio, where they could enjoy something more than the illusion of

Molmenti, Calli e Canali.

a home, and where they were at least blessed with that privacy which is almost the first and last necessity of the well-born.

One is reminded of the rules of that Florentine Confraternity for the relief of the 'poor who felt shame,' a body to which Dante belonged. By those rules the brethren were bound to give assistance without lifting the hood that covered their faces, or giving their names, or in any way betraying their individuality, lest the poor person whom they helped should be in some degree humiliated. This really exquisite delicacy of feeling showed itself in the very midst of the worst and fiercest quarrels of Guelph and Ghibelline, and the rule of the Confraternity expressly commanded the brothers to help their foes as freely as their friends, and to be especially careful never to do anything which could humiliate an enemy in distress.

The chronicles of Florence say nothing of that, and if the Venetian historians mention the Ca' di Dio at all, it is only in the most passing way. But the historical writers of both cities carefully record the murders, poisonings, and stabbings which brought disaster on their citizens. Should not a true history of civilisation sometimes count also the tears that charity has dried and the anguish she has helped to soothe? The chroniclers abound in accounts of the trials, the sentences, and the executions of the fourteenth century; they can scarcely spare a line to tell us how the Doge and many other devout persons heard mass daily at dawn and recited the Office for the Dead in Saint Mark's. We

know with the utmost exactness the precise number of light ladies who were living in Venice just then: there were eleven thousand six hundred and fifty —a respectable, or rather a disreputable, number for a city of two hundred thousand inhabitants. The quarter of the Castelletto, which had originally been given over to them, no longer sufficed for their needs, and they lived very much where they pleased.

Galliccioli, vi. 150.

We know these things, but few remember that at that very time a gentle, beseeching voice was heard every evening in the streets and squares of Venice, crying out 'Pity, pity!' It was the voice of a poor monk slowly pursuing his way under the balconies of the great palaces, and through the narrower ways where the rich middle class had chosen its abode, for ever asking alms for the poor little children whom he found nightly thrust out, new-born, to die in the streets before morning, even as is done to this day in China. And though it was Venice that cast her children out to perish thus, yet Venice poured alms into the poor monk's hands so abundantly that his labours prospered beyond his highest hopes. A lady of the Dolfini family gave him no less than seventeen houses for his foundlings, and yet these were not enough; he appealed to the Government for more room; and this same Government, which seems in our view of its history to be for ever deep in politics, in commerce, and above all in spying upon its own citizens, answered Fra Pieruzzo della Pietà, as the monk was called, with a decree that has a very human and tender note in it. It was

Bembo, Beneficenza.

declared therein that the little foundlings should bring blessings and fortune to all honest people who would offer them a home; and whosoever adopted one of the children was thereby freely licensed to open a shop or to exchange a mean and vulgar occupation for one of the nobler arts. Besides this, the State settled upon



the Hospice of the Pietà one-half of the fines imposed upon blasphemers, which amounted to a very large sum.

The religious spirit of Venice in the thirteenth century is reflected not only in the public charities of the times, but also in the legends that have come down to us, founded on some small original basis of truth, concrete or abstract. There is one in particular which it is impossible to overlook, though it has been told by

many writers of all nations during many hundred years. I mean the story of the little Countess Tagliapietra.

In the year 1288 a noble couple dwelt in their palace, not far from the home of Bajamonte Tiepolo, the great conspirator, in the central parish of Saint Agostino, which is one of those most cut up by the numberless lanes and canals which cross it in all directions. It pleased Heaven to send a little girl child to Count Pier Nicola Tagliapietra and his wife Elena, one only, but she was of such exquisite beauty and rare loveliness of character that her parents esteemed themselves more blessed than those who could boast of ten stalwart sons. From her earliest years the child seemed destined to saintliness, and her chiefest pleasure was to follow her mother to church, for in the thirteenth century it had not yet become the custom to keep girls closely shut up at home from year's end to year's end.

Vita della Contessa Tagliapietra, Anonymous.

The title of Countess was unheard of in Venice at that time, and yet every account of the legend assigns it to the little saint. Her favourite church was that of San Maurizio, and the little Countess seized every possible occasion for going there; sometimes she even went alone, for every one knew her, and she was perfectly safe in the streets; but in order to get there she was obliged to cross the canal in a boat—gondolas did not exist in that day. Now her father entertained ambitious projects for the marriage of his only daughter; and from having been at first merely surprised by her extreme devoutness, he now became seriously anxious

for her future, and forbade the child to go to church except on feast-days and with her mother. She replied with quiet decision that he had no right to impose such a sacrifice upon her, and she continued going to San Maurizio every day. Her father did not wish to seem harsh or unkind, and he imagined that he could gain his end by simply forbidding the boatmen to take her across the canal. Having done so, and having doubtless enforced his wishes by giving the men money, Pier Nicola felt perfectly at ease, for he could not see that the girl had any chance of getting to San Maurizio without a boat.

On the following morning she went down to the 'traghetto' as usual, and called to one of the boatmen. One after the other they all refused to take her over, explaining that they were acting under her father's orders. The little girl looked at them all sweetly with deep and innocent eyes; then, without the least hesitation, she took off her little apron, spread it upon the smooth water of the canal, and stepped upon it securely as if it had been the largest of the boats.

It not only carried her weight, but began to move of its own accord, and bore her swiftly across to the opposite bank; and when the boatmen and those who passed by saw what was done they raised a loud cry and praised God for the miracle they had seen, and it was noised abroad throughout all the city.

The first consequence seems to have been, that a vast number of very eligible noble youths asked for the young saint in marriage, and her father had only to

choose amongst so many brilliant matches the one best suited to his taste; but the child steadfastly refused matrimony, and declared that she would never live in the world. As she grew older it became harder and harder to sustain the struggle, and at the age of twenty she daily implored God to deliver her from this wicked world. And so, indeed, it pleased Heaven, for she departed this life on the Feast of All Saints, in the year 1308. The whole city followed her to the grave, numberless wax candles were lit before her tomb, and no man dared to extinguish them. Is not the voice of the people the voice of God? The clergy would not interfere, and from the day of her death the little Countess received the title of Beata, and the church of San Vito, where she was buried, became the goal of constant pilgrimages. It was not until the sixteenth century that the Church interfered to put limits to a veneration which had degenerated to a superstition. It was no longer enough to invoke the prayers and aid of the blessed little Countess; it had become the custom to open her coffin at stated intervals, and mothers laid their infant children upon her bones to preserve them from the danger of drowning.

But now the sepulchre was sealed, the little Countess was officially admitted to be a saint, and those who should dare to profane her relics with any superstitious practice were threatened with immediate excommunication.

Another legend, of a slightly later date, has been gloriously handed down to us by the genius of Paris

of terror which became so very common in Venice, that in the sixteenth century all the popular tales represent devils and fiends struggling against the supernatural powers of saints. Last of all, even the saints and demons disappeared, and the degenerate eighteenth century expressed its love of fiction in a set of ghost stories as terrifying as any that the human imagination has ever evolved out of darkness.

Next to all that is connected with religion, that which would do the most to give a clear idea of the fourteenth century would be the study of women and their position at that time, but an almost total lack of documents makes this absolutely impossible. We can learn from old family papers and carefully preserved accounts what women were, and we may even to some extent reconstruct the frame of their outward existence; but the soul of it all escapes us. The story I have told of the little patrician girl alone stands out to give us some idea of what a spotless child's thoughts could be in a city which was even then one of the most perverse in Europe. But of the many other Venetian ladies whom history mentions by name we know absolutely nothing, so far as their private lives are concerned. One dogess after another appears in magnificent garments; but we feel no more interest in them than if they were so many gorgeous wax figures, for no one has taken the trouble to tell us whether this one was beloved or that one hated; whether one was a woman of heart, or another proud, ambitious, and vain. In most cases we do not even know their ages. Why should any one care?

Each one was 'the dogess of her day,' and that was enough; she was the companion and consort of the doge, but beyond that, in a State in which the supreme dignity was not hereditary, her value was purely decorative.

The fourteenth century was not remarkable for much luxury or feminine display. Among the most characteristic objects used in those times were the extraordinary clogs, with double heels and enormously high, on which women went about in order to keep their skirts out of the mud. For the streets and lanes were not even paved, and there seems to have been no great effort made to clean them. The principal scavengers seem to have been the little pigs of the monastery of Saint Anthony of Padua, which had an official right-of-way about the city, and devoured greedily whatever the good wives of Venice chose to throw into the streets when they cleaned out their kitchens. It will easily be understood that clogs might be useful in such a town. As another illustration of the times, here is a list of the exiguous outfit provided for a young lady of great family on her marriage in the year 1300: One bed, two down quilts, two pillows, four sheets, one coverlet, six silver spoons, one copper pail; one piece of scarlet stuff long enough to make a bodice, one skirt of the same material; one skirt of striped stuff, and one trimming for the said skirt of the price of nine soldi grossi; one skin of a fox; seven amber beads, one ornament made of pearls, an ornament of gold, a silver belt and some silver beads.

The display of jewellery on that occasion was certainly not magnificent, but the list of clothes leaves even more to be desired. The document explains further, and determines precisely how the wedding is to be conducted, and what it is to cost the family of the bride. The bride, when she reaches Padua, is to receive twelve soldi grossi for her pocket money, a like sum to pay for the drums, and the same again for the cook; but only half as much for the duenna who is to accompany her, and who rejoices in the high-sounding name of Richadonor, 'rich in honour'! Furthermore, forty soldi grossi were to be spent on beef, pork, poultry, biscuits, apples, birds, eggs, bread, torches, wax candles, and the hire of boats.

Living was certainly not dear in those days, and we have no means of calculating the value of the coins used, about which learned men have fruitlessly quarrelled for generations; we cannot by any means establish the value of such an outfit, but we can affirm most positively that the outfit itself bore no resemblance whatever to those provided two centuries later for brides of the very same family.

In this connection it is as well to say that the marriage customs of Venice had changed considerably during the thirteenth century. It had become altogether impossible to celebrate all marriages on the same day of the year in the same church, as was formerly done, and weddings now took place throughout the year in the different parishes.

Gallicciolі, vi. 18.

An edict of the year 1255 recommends the publi-

cation of marriage banns in Venice, but very little attention was paid to this regulation, and clandestine



RIO DELLA PANADA

marriages became one of the great evils of the day. If, for instance, an unmarried woman of any condition

found herself hopelessly in debt, she had only to marry in order to be safe from any legal action on the part of her creditors. It was so easy to get the ceremony performed, if one wished to keep the affair quiet, that it was not even necessary to go to church. A priest could be sent for to a private house, or even to an inn, the witnesses heard the necessary words pronounced, the priest blessed the couple, and the union was irrevocable.

The Government took cognisance of the innumerable abuses which resulted from this manner of proceeding, and a law was passed which would have introduced a real reform if it had been rigorously enforced. But instead it was so completely overlooked and forgotten that the archives of the law-courts a century later teem with amusing anecdotes of such marriages. The following is a specimen taken from the case of a certain Dame Caterina of the parish of Saint Gervasio.

One evening, as this good lady was lingering on the threshold of her own door, a certain Pierin da Trento came by, selling brooms. Having greeted Dame Caterina, who appears to have been an acquaintance, the man said, 'Good madam, I pray you find me out some handsome girl.' Thereupon the good lady was immediately very angry, and loaded Pierin with the choicest epithets in the Venetian language, all of which are scrupulously quoted in the report of the case. Pierin, however, protested, 'No, no, Dame Caterina, I did not mean what you think! I am asking you to find me a nice little wife to whom I will be a model husband.' She answered, 'Well, well, on my faith I

will try and find one for you. Come back to-morrow.' She immediately thought of a young girl called Maria who waited upon herself and her daughter. On the morrow the parties met in the house of Dame Caterina, and one Menego Moisè, who was there, asked, 'Maria, does Pietro suit you as a husband according to the commandments of God and Holy Church?' She answered, 'Yes.' So they took each other by the hand, and all the company sat down to table with great joy.

This was apparently all that was necessary to make a marriage binding. It is not even explicitly stated that the man Menego who asked the ritual question was a priest; but unless we suppose that something like common-law marriage was legal in Venice, we may take it for granted that he was.

Of course, in the absence of a divorce law, the chief object of such summary marriages was that they might be denied, and such cases led to some lively fencing between the civil and religious authorities.

In spite of these abuses, however, and in spite of the numerous regular and proper marriages that took place in the parish churches, the old custom of marrying wholesale on the thirty-first of January had not fallen wholly into disuse. I shall describe in another place the Feast of the Maries, instituted to recall the one which had been disturbed long ago by the Dalmatian pirates, and which was celebrated every year with the same mixture of simplicity, display, and jollity.

One might get married quietly, with closed doors

and without sound of drum or trumpet, but it was quite impossible to be buried with the same simplicity and privacy. All the chroniclers of those times have left accounts of funerals, which remind one very strongly of the East, and even of ancient Egyptian and Assyrian rites. It was absolutely indispensable that a husband on the death of his wife, or a wife on the death of her husband, should exhibit in public the most extravagant grief. The bereaved widow or widower was expected to scream, to roll upon the ground, to tear out his or her hair by the handful, to howl and moan with scarcely a moment's intermission.

When at last the friends of the dead came to carry away the body, the frenzied relict was always found stretched upon the threshold of the house, to prevent the funeral from passing, and had to be dragged out of the way by main force. The body having been carried out of the house at last, the whole family followed it to the parish church with screams and howls, and kept up the same terrific noise during the chanting of the whole funeral service. This insane custom was so deeply rooted amongst the people that centuries elapsed before the Church could put it down, and only threats of excommunication sufficed to prevent the unseemly interruption of the Office for the Dead. Those who have lived in the far East, and especially in India, are familiar with such sights. No one who has heard the lamentations of hired mourners at an Asiatic funeral is likely to forget the impression he received; but it is hard to understand such doings amongst the Venetians of the

fourteenth century, and that the poor sometimes even went so far as to expose their dead in the streets during several days, in order to excite the compassion and solicit the alms of those who passed by.

It is quite certain that slavery was not only common but almost universal in Venice until the fifteenth century at least. The custom of keeping household slaves was indeed general throughout Italy in the Middle Ages, but it was nowhere so deep-rooted as in Venice. Church and State laboured in vain to put down the traffic and to discourage the purchase of slaves. In the year 960 the Doge Pier Candiano IV. threatened with very severe punishments all those who should either engage in or encourage the slave trade. And at the same time the Patriarch declared himself as follows: 'Moreover, we and our brother bishops will excommunicate all those who shall be proved guilty before the tribunals of the State; they shall be deprived of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist; they shall not be allowed to enter any church; and if they do not repent, they shall burn everlastingly with Judas, who sold our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Schupper, Manuale della Storia del Diritto.

The civil and ecclesiastic authorities could not have expressed themselves in stronger language, but it is clear that their edicts could not be enforced, for slavery continued to flourish during four centuries after that time. We have not even the satisfaction of telling ourselves that it was at last put down by a noble impulse of humanity, since the most superficial examination proves

to us that slavery did not begin to diminish in Venice until the general depravity of women had brought them down to the moral level of slaves. That very depravity was itself in great part produced by the presence of an immense number of Eastern female slaves, absolutely without any moral sense, and having no object whatever in life except to extract favours from their masters by making themselves the willing instruments of every passion and of every vice. They possessed many means of accomplishing this end, and in particular a great many of them claimed the secret knowledge of philtres, which would not only heal every malady, but which could instantly satisfy their masters' thirst for love or revenge. They pretended, by means of incantations, to destroy by degrees the life of an enemy who could not be safely stabbed or otherwise violently put to death; and in a vast number of cases the victim actually died, if not by supernatural means, by subtle poisons administered to him by some slave of his own in collusion with the witch. Often, too, men and women went suddenly raving mad from poison thus secretly administered, and remained permanently insane. This crime was so common that it had a name of its own, and was called 'Erbaria.'

The whole of Venice was undermined by these slave intrigues. The Eastern woman possesses beyond all others the secret of secrecy. The thousands of them who lived in Venice were in communication with each other, helped each other, and could accomplish for their respective masters almost anything

Mutinelli, Costumi.

they desired. There was a certain number of male slaves also, who, though far less astute than the women, often rendered their owners great services, sometimes to their own destruction ; for there are records of their having been imprisoned, tortured, and hanged instead of their masters, and sometimes with the latter, for having committed crimes of which their owners did not wish to take the responsibility.



FONDAMENTA MARCOTTA

IX

THE FEAST OF THE MARIES

THE reader will not have forgotten how the Venetian brides were carried off by pirates of Narenta towards the middle of the tenth century, in the reign of Pier Candiano III. When, at a later date, the custom of celebrating all marriages on the same day of the year and in the same church was abandoned, the ceremony called 'the Maries' was continued each year in memory of the romantic event.

The brides were replaced by twelve young girls, who were chosen among the most well-behaved in the city, so that the choice became a sort of prize of virtue—a 'Prix Montyon'—and the selection was made with the utmost care. At that time the city was divided into six wards, each of which contained thirty 'contrade,' or districts. Two of the latter were named each year to furnish the 'twelve Maries.' The headmen of the districts, who were like police magistrates, called together the people in the principal open place of the district, and the election began. The chroniclers do not agree upon the qualities which were required in candidates; some say that they were all to be noble, some that they were to be poor, another says that they were the most beautiful. There is only one point upon which all agree: their behaviour was required to be perfect.

The twelve Maries having been chosen, the meeting proceeded to elect the twelve nobles at whose houses the young girls were to be entertained. These personages were to be of the same district, or were at least to live in the immediate vicinity; and it was no sinecure to fulfil this office of hospitality. The district spent from eight hundred to a thousand ducats in decorating the streets and houses, and the boats that conveyed the Maries; and the patrician whose ill-luck had designated him as one of the patrons was obliged to make such a display and to furnish such a magnificent banquet in honour of the girl he was supposed to protect, and such a reception for the inhabitants of the

whole district, that his pocket suffered severely, and he was obliged to economise for some time afterwards. It often happened that there were not so many as twelve rich nobles living in the district, and in that case matters were arranged by giving two Maries to one, who was thus condemned to a double expenditure, if not to actual ruin, for the greater glory of patriotic institutions. However, as time went on, the State was moved by such misfortunes, which were not really justified by any serious necessity, and the Great Council voted that the Doge should exercise a certain control over the election of the Maries and their official protectors. By this means it became possible for a noble in poor circumstances to pass on the burden of the feast to some richer man. It was further decided that the procurators of Saint Mark should be authorised to lend on security, to the districts and to the patrons chosen, all the jewels from the treasure of the Basilica, with which to adorn the attire of the twelve young girls. These jewels consisted of numerous necklaces and diadems of immense value, and the fact that they were lent for such an occasion proves the great importance which the Venetians attached to the festivity. For the time being the Republic behaved as if it had fallen in love with the maidens whose part was to recall to memory the stolen brides of old. On one occasion it is recorded that no less than 72,000 ducats were expended on the feast.

By far the most interesting and charmingly simple account of the feast is that left by a certain Martin da

Canal, written in a dialect half French and half Provençal. It describes the Feast of the Maries in the second half of the twelfth century, when Ranier Zeno was Doge; and though a few modifications were afterwards introduced in the ceremonial, this account continues to be quite the most accurate that has come down to us. The only way of accounting for its having been written in the Provençal tongue is that the latter was the language of polished society in that age. Here is an attempt to translate it as simply and accurately as possible:—

Arch. Stor. Ital. Series I., vol. viii.

I shall now tell you about the festival which the Venetians hold on the last day of January, to wit, in remembrance of how our Lord St. Mark came to Venice; and of the beautiful festival which the Venetians hold in reverence of our Lady St. Mary. You must know that the Lord Doge has divided the districts of Venice into thirty parts, two districts to each part. Now on the eve of our Lord St. Mark a company of young gentles come by water, and when they have reached the palace they land and hand their banners to little boys, and go two by two before the church of our Lord St. Mark; and after them come trumpeters, and after them again young gentles who carry silver dishes loaded with confectionery, and with them are brought vessels of silver, full of wine, and cups of gold and silver carried by more young nobles, and last of all come clerks singing, dressed in their copes of velvet and gold, and they all together go as far as the church of St. Mary, which is called Formosa; and they find women and maidens in great numbers, and present them with the confectionery and with wine to drink. . . .

So far I have told you of the eve, and now I shall tell you of the day of our Lord St. Mark.

You must know, sirs, that on the last day of January is the feast and double procession, when come youths and men of age to the palace of our Lord the Doge by water; and they get out upon the dry land, and give more than one thousand banners to little children, and send them before them two and two to the church of our Lord St. Mark; and after them come the older children carrying in their hands more than a hundred crosses of silver; and afterwards come the clergy, all dressed in copes of velvet and gold; and trumpets and cymbals; and a clerk comes in the midst of the company, dressed in a cloth all of gold damask, after the manner of the Virgin, our Lady St. Mary; and that clerk is placed upon a very richly ornamented chair, which is carried by four men on their shoulders; and before him, and on each side, the standards of gold, and the clerks go singing in the procession. While they are thus going, three clerks come out of the procession, and where they see our Lord the Doge at the windows of his palace, in company with noble Venetians, they go up to a platform singing with a loud voice, and they all sing as follows:—'Christ is King. Christ reigns!' 'To our Lord Ranier Zeno, by the grace of God Doge of Venice, Dalmatia, and Croatia, and ruler of the fourth part and one-half a fourth part of all the empire of the Romans, health, long life, and victory!' 'St. Mark, help thou him!' When the praises are finished they come down from the platform, and our Lord the Doge causes to be thrown down to them a quantity of his medals, and they return into the procession with the rest who have meanwhile been waiting for them; and then comes forward a clerk who wears a crown of gold, and is richly attired after the manner of the Holy Virgin, as I have told you; and when he is very near our Lord the Doge he greets him, who returns his greeting, and then those who carry him on their shoulders go forward, and the procession follows them, and they go their way into the church of our Lady St. Mary,

and wait there until those of the other district have also entered. Now these others come in the manner which I have explained, with banners, crosses, and priests, and cause three clerks to sing the same praises of our Lord the Doge as did the others, and our Lord the Doge causes medals to be thrown down to them. You must know our Lord the Doge is dressed in cloth of gold, and has a crown of gold upon his head; and in order to see the procession, which is made in honour of our Lady, there are present the nobles of Venice, all the people, and a great number of ladies and maidens, and there are many of them both in the streets and at the windows of the palaces.

When the three clerks have sung the praises of the Lord Doge, in the same manner in which those who came first had done, they go on in procession again, and another clerk comes forward, who sits upon a seat most richly adorned, in the dress of an angel, and he is carried on the shoulders of four men. When he is near our Lord Doge he salutes him, and the Lord Doge returns his salute; and then they go on in the procession, and the clerks go on singing. [It is amusing to note that until 1328 the priests who figured as the Madonna and the angel rose in the presence of the Doge, but this was discontinued from that date as improper.] You must know that both clerks and laymen have good 'ramarri' (?) and they go until they enter the church of our Lady St. Mary. When the priest who is arrayed to resemble the angel has entered into the church and sees the other who is arrayed to resemble the Virgin Mary, he stands up and says as follows: 'Hail, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Thus saith the Lord.' And the priest who is arrayed to resemble our Lady answers and says, 'How can this be, oh thou angel of God, since I know not a man?' And the angel answers, 'The Holy Spirit descends in thee. Oh, Mary, fear nothing, thou shalt conceive the Son of God.' And she

answers and says, 'Behold the handmaiden of the Lord. Let it be with me according to Thy word.'

What shall I tell you? After these words they leave the church and go to their own houses, and after they have eaten, the people, men and women, go into the districts that have made these processions, and they find in twelve houses the twelve Maries, so beautifully arrayed as is a wonder to see. Each one has a crown of gold with precious stones upon her head, and they are dressed in cloth of gold, and on their robes there are precious stones and pearls without number. The ladies and maidens sit around them, very richly dressed, and the men present their friends with confectionery to eat and with wine to drink. And on the following day they make other feasts in their twelve houses. And our Lord the Doge wears the crown of gold on the eve of our Lady, as he wears it at Pentecost, and after vespers he returns to the palace in the same manner in which he came. On our Lady's day, the second of February, each of the two districts which give the beautiful and rich festival, as I have narrated, prepare six great barges, and have them rowed to the head of the city, exactly where the Bishop of Venice lives; these six barges are very richly draped with cloth of gold and carpets. And then ladies and maidens are taken on board four of them, very richly habited, and they put the Maries in the midst, and in another barge go forty men well armed, with their drawn swords in their hands; and in another go the clerks arrayed with the richest treasures of the church. Then comes the Bishop, and gives his benediction, and when he has blessed them they all return into their barges, and the Bishop goes with them, with two abbots in their great barges, so richly dressed, and they are all arrayed in copes of cloth of gold. The Lord Bishop has his canons in his company, and the two abbots have their monks. Then the barges set forth from the palace of the Lord Bishop, adorned as I told you, and they meet upon their

way two magnificent barges, which are to be for the same festival next year. They all go thus before the church of our Lord St. Mark, and there they drop anchor, and lie to wait for the coming of our Lord the Doge. When the Bishop and the two abbots have come to the shore they go out upon dry land with all their company, and go together into the church of our Lord St. Mark, and find our Lord the Doge at mass; and after mass they come back to the barges. The Lord Doge comes under the umbrella, with the Bishop by him on one side and the senior canon on his other side, and both the abbots before them. The Doge is crowned with gold, and the Bishop wears his mitre, and the abbots, the chaplains, and the canons go singing in procession; the trumpets and the cymbals go before every one, and the crosses afterwards. In this manner the Lord Doge goes as far as his great barge, and enters it with the nobility of Venice, and his Judge is beside him, and behind him is placed in the ship he who carries the Doge's sword. When our Lord Doge has entered the great ship in company with the nobility of Venice, and of many honourable men, he sits down between the senior canon and his Judge, and they sit down upon the barge; and the Bishop and the two abbots enter their barges; then the men of the barges weigh anchor, and they go to the other end of the city, and you must know that the city is very long, a league and a half, or more. But if you were there, sirs, you might well see the water covered with boats, full of men and women who follow, of whom you must know that you could never tell the number. And in the windows of the palaces and on the banks there is a throng of ladies and maidens, as many as there are in all the city, and so richly dressed that you could see none finer. With such joy and festivity they go to the other end of the city, and then return to their own districts, and the Lord Doge with all his company returns to his palace, and finds the tables set, and he eats with all those who have been with him.

It is worth noting that in the fourteenth century the Doge's vessel was no longer called the principal barge, but the Bucentaur, the name being probably, as some say, derived from 'Buzeus aureus,' and so called in some documents. It was a rich vessel, adorned with carvings, stuffs, carpets, and paintings. Up to 1311 it was not rowed, but was towed by another boat, which was draped and rowed by men of Murano; but after that year it had its own rowers.

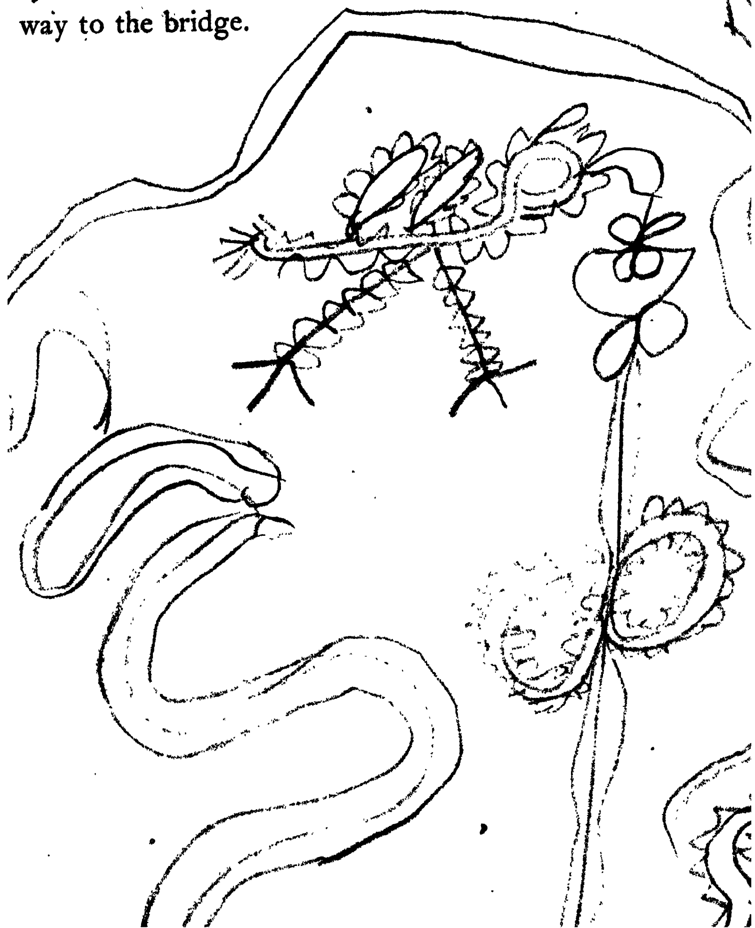
It is easy to understand that such a festival as Martin da Canal describes might be the ruin of more than one great house, and it cost even the State enormous sums, which is one reason why it was not always celebrated with equal magnificence. In 1350, when the plague had greatly reduced the budget, it was decided to substitute painted wooden statues for the twelve young girls, but the public strongly opposed this innovation. The recollection of these wooden dolls has never been wholly effaced; it is still common in Venice to call a woman who is thin, cold, stupid, and pretentious, 'a wooden Mary.'

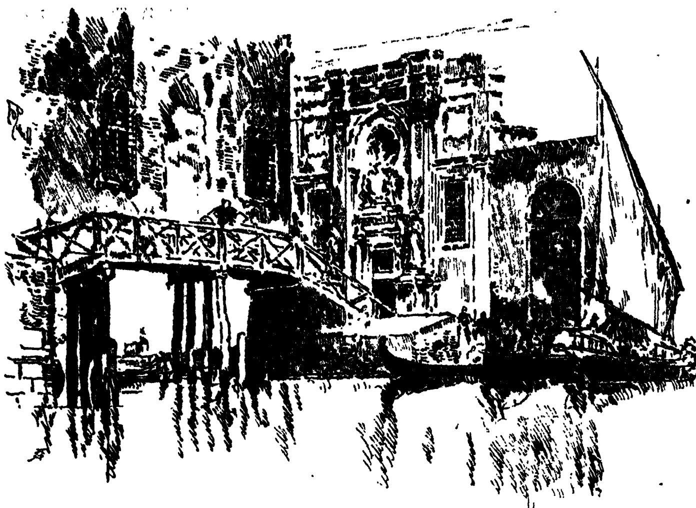
G. R. Michiel, Origini.

The feast was given up at the end of the fourteenth century, at the time of the final struggle with Genoa. The treasury was empty, and excessive anxiety kept the public spirits in a state of nervous tension; moreover, the age of the ideal Venetian woman was past, and she no longer inspired profound and chivalrous devotion as in the old days when she had been more modest, more retiring, and more gentle.

Of all that splendid show and pageant nothing

remained but the Doge's visit to the church of Santa Maria Formosa, and his largess of small coins to the street boys at the moment of loosing the line with which the rector of the church pretended to bar the way to the bridge.





THE ABBAZZIA

X

THE DOGES IN THE EARLY PART OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

PIETRO GRADENIGO reigned twenty-two years, during a very eventful period. In 1298 he had placed the aristocratic supremacy on a permanent basis, and a few months later he crushed the sedition of Marin Bocconio; eight years afterwards he put down the much more dangerous insurrection of Tiepolo and the Quirini; but he was less fortunate abroad than at home, and his foreign policy resulted in the wholesale excommunication of the Venetian people and Government, as the direct

consequence of the attempt to annex Ferrara, a step which had also led to the organisation of the Tiepolo conspiracy. When Gradenigo died the papal interdict was still in full force.

The forty-one patricians who were to elect his successor were duly chosen and shut up in the ducal palace, though not yet with any great precautions to prevent them from communicating with their friends. They understood well enough that the interests of the State required a Doge whose genuine piety should move the Pope to forgiveness; such a man was found in the senator Stefano Giustiniani, and in a short time the majority of votes was in his favour. He was not only a man of irreproachable life, but also a first-rate statesman, and he was personally well known and liked in Rome, where he had once resided as Venetian ambassador. The choice was a good one, but the patrician was too virtuous, or too wise, or both, to accept the supreme office at such a moment, foreseeing clearly that his conscience and reputation would be simultaneously at stake, and in such a way that to save the one would probably have been to imperil the other.

He had long nourished the hope of retiring from the world, and when he knew that he was elected he lost no time in carrying out his pious design. Instead of going from his house to the ducal palace, he disappeared within the doors of the monastery of Saint George, and on the same day put on the habit and took the obligations of a novice.

The stupefaction and embarrassment of the electors

may be imagined; it was perhaps within the powers of the all-powerful Government to drag Giustiniani from the refuge of his cell, and to place him by force upon



CAMPO S. MARIA

the ducal throne, but such a course would certainly not have improved the relations of the Republic with the Pope, a result which had been the sole object of the election. On the other hand, it seemed impossible even

to agree upon the names of candidates in order to proceed to an election. The electors fell into a state of apathy of which there is probably no example in history; they moved about in an objectless way, talking listlessly of anything that occurred to them; they even lingered at the open windows of the palace, to watch the people passing in the street.

As they looked down they saw an aged nobleman slowly walking toward the postern gate of the prisons, followed by a servant who carried a big sack of bread, so full that the loaves protruded from the open mouth. It was Marin Zorzi, a charitable and devout person, on his way to distribute food to the poor prisoners. He was the very man. Before he had left the prisons he was elected Doge.

Rom. iii. 83.

Unhappily this hasty choice did not improve matters. An old chronicler sums up in a few words the short reign that followed: Zorzi lived ten months, during which he never saw the sea calm nor the sun without clouds. All that remained to mark his reign was an asylum for poor children, the earliest foundation of the kind in the world.

In less than a year, therefore, another election took place, and as the experiment of looking out of the palace windows in the hope of seeing the right man pass in the street had been a failure, the electors were shut up, windows and balcony doors were closely sealed, and the forty-one were driven to look at each other. In a short time they elected Giovanni Soranzo by a considerable majority.

So far as I can ascertain, he was born in 1240, and was therefore about seventy-one years old in 1311; but the longevity of the Venetian nobles was always remarkable, and he was destined to reign seventeen years. He had rendered the Republic very eminent service on more than one occasion, and was a man of astounding activity. To mention only a few incidents of his busy life, in its later years, he had commanded a fleet of twenty-five galleys against the Genoese when already fifty-six years old, had taken possession of the port of Caffa, and had defended it during a whole winter against the combined attacks of the Genoese and the Tartars, and had captured a goodly number of richly laden Genoese vessels. On his return to Venice he had been received with honours resembling those of a triumph, and had soon found himself in arms again, but on land this time, against Padua first, and then against Ferrara, which he had already governed as Podestà. When at last recalled to Venice he had occupied the important position of a procurator of Saint Mark, from which post he was elected Doge to succeed Marin Zorzi.

Rom. iii. 89, 103, and notes.

Soranzo was undeniably one of the most illustrious men elected to the dogeship in the course of its existence of exactly eleven hundred years. It is enough to say that he reconciled the Republic with the Pope, and reconquered Dalmatia; and that, in spite of the vast sums of money which both these undertakings cost, he protected and developed Venetian manufacture and commerce so diligently as to increase the public wealth

instead of diminishing it. It was during his reign that the weaving of silk stuffs in Venice reached a perfection hitherto undreamt of, surpassing, according to the taste of the day, the fabrics of the Levant and driving them out of the market. Under Soranzo the glass-works of Murano produced mirrors that outdid the very best that could be made in Germany, for clearness and brilliancy. At the same time, the Arsenal of Venice was greatly extended by the addition of new basins, windmills were set up all over the islands, many like improvements, then modern, were introduced, a general condition of ease and well-being extended through all classes, and the population increased more quickly than ever before. The State could count forty thousand men between the ages of twenty and sixty years who were able to bear arms. For a silver ducat a man could buy enough meat and flour to support him for a week, with as much wine as he needed, and wood to cook with and to warm him.

So Giovanni Soranzo reigned in success and plenty and honour to the very end of his long life. Yet in all those seventeen years he cannot have counted one day truly happy, and many must have been profoundly saddened by the knowledge of his own daughter's sufferings in her captivity at the convent of the Vergini. Time and again she poured out her heart to him, in letters which he was not even allowed to answer without permission of his counsellors, and probably of the recently-elected Council of Ten; and the old captain, whose commanding voice had been heard above many storms at sea and many a fight on land, had to humble

himself before the Power, and humbly beg a little sunshine, an hour's liberty, for the daughter he adored.

They saw each other rarely enough for a long time. It was not till the great old man's strength was breaking down beneath the weight of nearly ninety years that his daughter was allowed to leave her prison more frequently that she might tend him and cheer his declining days. He died in her arms in the end, on the last day of December in the year 1328, eighty-eight years old; and the unhappy woman must have found some small comfort in the universal grief that rose to meet her own. She went back to her cell; but the body of the great Doge was laid out in a hall of the palace, dressed in the mantle of state and the ducal cap. He was borne thence to Saint Mark's, whither the Dogess had gone before with her ladies, and when the last requiem had been sung Giovanni Soranzo was laid in the chapel of the baptistery. His simple tomb bears the arms of his family and little else that tells of his glory, as all may see to this day.

The great bell had scarcely ceased to toll for him when it rang out the summons to elect his successor, and the Council met to this end. But Soranzo's reign had made changes, which, as they came gradually, were not noticed, but which were plain enough now that a new Doge was to be chosen. Prosperity had increased vastly, and with it luxury and the magnificence of all that represented the Republic's power. Soranzo had been very rich, but his successor might be poor. Soranzo had filled the ducal palace with his own plate, his own array

of servants and footmen, and all his rich belongings. Ambassadors had come and gone, and had seen how the Doge lived ; it might not be that they should come again, and find a poor man living under the same roof, dining off earthenware dishes and served by a few threadbare retainers. Venice had many faults, and Venice, as a city, loved money, but Venice, the Republic, was never sordid, nor miserly, nor mean. Before the Council elected the next Doge a large provision was settled upon his office for ever ; his salary was increased from four thousand ducats to five thousand two hundred, which is far more, considering the value of money, than the President of the United States receives to-day ; the ducal palace was amply furnished with vessels of gold and silver ; it was made a rule that the Doge was henceforth to keep five-and-twenty servants, neither more nor less, and that each should have two new liveries every year. In case the new sovereign should not have ready means at hand to defray the expenses of his coronation and of his change of domicile, it was decreed that a loan (for business was business) of three thousand lire should be placed at his disposal out of State funds ; and, finally, a jeweller was ordered to make a very rich crown, which the Doge was to wear on great occasions, and which was to be in the keeping of the procurators of Saint Mark.

When Soranzo had been elected, an ancient custom still prevailed by which the population was allowed to joyously plunder the house of the new Doge of all it contained that was movable, precisely as the populace

of Rome plundered the house of the cardinal who was elected Pope, until a much later date. This half-civilised practice was now forbidden in Venice under heavy penalties.

All this was agreed upon, set down and made law, before beginning the process of balloting by which the forty-one electors of the Doge were chosen.

Their choice fell upon Francesco Dandolo, the skilful diplomatist by whose efforts Clement V. had been induced to remove the excommunication of Venice, and the enthusiasm of the people on learning the result was in proportion to what they had suffered during the period of the interdict, not yet forgotten. The multitude moved with one will towards his dwelling, and were for carrying him in triumph to the ducal palace, but he strongly protested against any such show, though the throng pressed upon him on his way to Saint Mark's. There he knelt before the high altar and received the investiture of his high dignity, and took the oath of fidelity before the headmen of the districts as representatives of the people of the city and of all the Venetian territory. Himself bearing the standard of Saint Mark in his right hand, he entered the ducal palace, ascended the great staircase—not yet the 'Giants' Staircase' of our time—and on the highest step took oath to observe all the obligations contained in the 'Ducal Promise.' The senior member of his own Council made a solemn acknowledgment of this oath, and the people listened in breathless silence to Dandolo's short but brilliant speech, breaking out in

renewed and yet more enthusiastic applause when he had finished.

During the following days festivities were organised for the coronation of the Dogess, much more various and of longer duration than those which greeted her husband's elevation to the throne. In older times, when the head of the Republic still possessed real power, his wife played no official part in State ceremonies. She lived as before, and the Doge could retire to her apartments and be in his home as if he were a private person, much as the modern Turk takes refuge in his harem. At most, the Dogess, as the first matron of the city, might outdo other patrician women in assisting public and private charities; but when the Doge's personal authority was almost gone, and he was required, in a degree, to compensate its loss by a certain amount of display and ceremony, intended to please the people and impose upon the representatives of foreign powers, the presence and influence of a woman became temporarily necessary. The Dogess then received a court of her own, and was required to wear a special dress, and for her a complete ceremonial was devised, from which she could not withdraw herself without incurring the displeasure of her husband and of the State itself.

Rom. iii. 109.

From the moment when the joyful multitude pressed to the doors of Dandolo's palace, his wife remained within, according to the new laws of conduct laid down for her. Then came the High Chancellor, as representative of the people, and the Doge's six

counsellors, to present their congratulations and to 'request'—or require—her strict observance of such clauses in the Ducal Promise as directly concerned herself. When these personages withdrew she presented each with a magnificent gold-embroidered purse.

A few days later, when all was ready for the ceremony, they came to fetch her with the Bucentaur, and *Molmenti, Dogaressa, 123.* in her honour was renewed the spectacle which had been given half a century earlier for the wife of Lorenzo Tiepolo. The vast and splendid barge had but a few times its own length to *Rom. iii. 109 sqq.* move from Dandolo's palace to the landing of the Piazzetta. An immense crowd was gathered there, from the borders of the canal to the door of the Basilica, a sufficient space being kept open in its midst for the display of the Dogess's pageant.

The guilds of the arts and trades had been privileged to escort the wife of Lorenzo Tiepolo to the church: first the blacksmiths with flying banner; then the merchants of fur, dressed in their richest garments and most priceless sables, and wearing ermines fit for an emperor; the weavers next, singing at the top of their voices to the music of trumpets and cymbals, and bearing both silver cups and flagons full of wine. After the weavers the tailors came in the dress of their trade guild, white robes embroidered with red stars; and the wool-merchants bore olive branches in their hands and had crowns of olive leaves on their heads; also the makers of quilts and coverlets were

crowned with gold beads, and wore on their shoulders white cloaks embroidered with fleur-de-lis; and there



were the sellers of cloth of gold, and the shoemakers, the mercers, the pork-butchers, the glass-blowers, the jewellers, and the barbers, all displaying the rich and

fantastic costumes of their guilds in the great procession, a very splendid sight.

Thus escorted the Dogess entered Saint Mark's, and knelt at the high altar, and before she went away she deposited thereon an offering of ten ducats. Then she was led to the throne-room of the palace and took her seat beneath a canopy beside her husband the Doge. The ceremony ended with a huge and sumptuous banquet, to which were invited all the heads of the guilds who had appeared in the procession.

Francesco Dandolo was a man of wit and of many resources. It is related, though without serious proof, that he had moved Clement V. to pity by appearing, as ambassador, in a penitent's dress, and wearing an iron collar, weeping and moaning, and remaining prostrate at the pontiff's feet. It has even been said that one or more of the cardinals kicked him as he lay there, called him a dog, and otherwise insulted him, but that he bore all patiently for his country's sake. One authority explains, however, that the nickname of 'dog,' or 'watch-dog,' had been bestowed upon his family long before that time, as 'Cane,' dog, and 'Mastino,' mastiff, were actually used as baptismal names in the great family of Scala.

He reigned ten years, with fortune good and evil, but chiefly good. More than once, in his time, the safety of the State was gravely menaced, but all ended well, and the sum of his administration was a gain to Venice.

Since the beginning of the fourteenth century the

city of Padua had been a prey to faction and internal strife. The aristocratic party fought for the family of the Scala, while the citizens and people were devoted to the house of Carrara. By turns the two families got the advantage and held the power, but the Carrara were really the stronger, for the Venetians helped them, on the ground that one of them, Jacopo, had married a daughter of the Doge Pietro Gradenigo.

Rom. iii. 115.

At last Cane della Scala made a sort of alliance with his rivals, and having got the mastery in several other cities, installed Marsilio Carrara in Padua as his lieutenant and representative. Had Cane della Scala lived this might have worked well enough; on his unexpected death his sons began to contrive how they should get rid of Marsilio; but they lacked skill and decision, and could neither conceal their intentions nor agree upon definite action. To make matters worse, one of them, Alberto della Scala, became madly enamoured of the wife of Albertino Carrara, and when every means failed to seduce her, took her to himself by brutal violence. After this outrage the thirst for vengeance drove the Carrara farther than mere ambition could have done.

The crimes of the Scala, no less than their miserable weakness in all political matters, had excited the profound resentment of Venice, of Florence, of Lucca, and of the Gonzaga and Este families; war was declared, and it was not long before the lords of Padua were reduced to extremities. Though they had always

maintained a haughty bearing towards Venice, they now attempted a reconciliation, and chose as their intermediary Marsilio di Carrara, whom they believed to be a traitor to his own family and devoted to their interests, and for whom the Republic had always shown a certain partiality, appreciating him, no doubt, at his true value, and anticipating the time when he might be useful.

But Marsilio, like every other Carrara, dreamt only of revenge upon the Scala. At a great public spectacle he was seated by the Doge. 'What will you give,' he asked in a quick whisper, 'to him who places Padua in your hands?' 'The city itself,' answered Francesco Dandolo without the slightest hesitation. The unsigned treaty of betrayal was agreed upon in those few whispered words, and was executed to the letter and at once. Padua was taken by the Venetians and handed over to the Carrara under a sort of agreement from which each of the allies derived some advantage, and there was an exchange of high-flown speeches, amongst which that of the Venetian Loredano recommended the most serene Republic's new favourites to behave with great goodness to her subjects, and to exhibit much gratitude towards her. On his side Marsilio begged that her 'kind offices' might be continued to him and his.

The consequences of this treaty were soon clear. Venice nominally gave Padua over to the Carrara in order to obtain the annexation of Treviso, which was much more important to her, and Alberto della Scala was not set at liberty till he had ceded the latter city to the Republic.

At the death of Francesco Dandolo, one naval battle lost to the Genoese represented Venice's loss during the reign; her gain was an extension of territory of immense value; the whole result was to involve the Republic in intrigues which very nearly led to her destruction.

At the very end of Dandolo's reign, according to a strange story told by Gabaro, a half-comic, half-dramatic incident occurred which showed well enough that the 'kind offices' of the Republic and the 'goodness' of the Carrara were not destined to last for ever. Marsilio was dead and Ubertino Carrara held Padua as his successor. Before long he was denounced by certain Venetian senators as a traitor and a secret enemy to the Republic. The words were reported to him, and he resolved to make sure, at any hazard, that they should not be repeated. Incredible as it may seem, he caused the senators who had accused him to be seized by night in Venice itself, gagged and bound, and at once brought before him in Padua.

Muratori Scrip. xvii. 32.

He threatened them at first with instant death, then allowed himself to be mollified by their entreaties, and finally dismissed them with a warning. If they ever raised their voices against him in the Senate again, or if they breathed one word of their nocturnal adventure, he would have them stabbed without mercy. They promised, and they kept their word; from that time forward no attack was made upon Ubertino Carrara in the Senate, the story of their forcible abduction remained a profound secret, which was not revealed until many years afterwards, when one of the Carrara's henchmen,

who had helped to carry off the senators, lay dying and confessed his share in the bold deed.

Dandolo was succeeded by Bartolommeo Gradenigo, during whose reign there were constant relations between the Republic and England, the latter continually soliciting the aid of Venice against Philip VI. of France, who was helped by the Genoese. Gradenigo did not fail to express gratitude to King Edward III. for the thankful anticipation of an assistance which was never forthcoming, and took no steps to induce the Senate to listen to England's tempting proposals. The king hoped to obtain from Venice forty ships of war, fully manned and equipped; but Venice either doubted his ability to pay, or was scared by the triumphant progress of the Turks in the Levant, which required her to act sentinel to Europe against the Mohammedan advance, and therefore to keep all her naval resources well in hand and ready for war; and, moreover, she was engaged in continual fighting in Candia (Crete), which was an unceasing drain upon her resources.

Rom. iii. 142.

At this critical time, when the position of Venice was by slow and sure degrees becoming one of great danger, the Doge died, and the great Andrea Dandolo was elected in his stead. Under the leadership of a less gifted and brave man, the ship of the Republic might well have foundered in the storm that broke over her. The King of Hungary disputed with Venice for Zara and the territory that belonged to it; the

1346. Zara taken back from the Hungarians, Tintoretto; Sala dello Scrutinio.

Genoese were exasperated in the highest degree by the commercial success of the Venetians in the East; the



RIO S. STIN

Pope was angry with the Republic because its Government would not make obligatory the payment of tithes

to the bishops. These were but a few of the half-grown troubles that were rapidly growing to maturity when the plague broke out in 1348 and devastated Italy from Genoa in the north, where forty thousand persons died, to Sicilian Trapani, where not one soul survived the universal death. In six months Venice lost more than half her population.

Boccaccio has left a description of the pest in Florence which is the greatest masterpiece of the kind ever produced by a great writer's pen; for his story fills us with horror, with pity, with sadness, but never arouses our disgust. The sufferings of Venice in those same six months have found neither poet nor novelist to describe them, but her careful chroniclers have left us the details of the defence she made against the ravages of the sickness, and of the medicines used in the attempt to save life.

As soon as the first cases of the plague had proved beyond doubt that it had crossed the lagoons and reached the city, the Council appointed three nobles, designated as 'Wise Men of the Plague,' with power to take all possible measures to stop the spreading of the contagion. Their first decree forbade the poor to expose the bodies of their dead in the street in order to obtain alms. A separate burial-place was marked out and consecrated for the free burial of the victims of the disease. The port was closed, and sentinels were placed all along the outer shore of the islands to hinder all outsiders from landing or from introducing suspicious merchandise.

Rom. iii. 156.

The physicians were at that time already organised in a guild of their own, and received from the State a modest yearly stipend of three hundred lire of 'piccoli,' about £50. They were now ordered to visit diligently both the hospitals and private houses, and a formal inquiry was made into the resources of the public apothecary, whose place was near the Rialto at the sign of the Golden Head. It was most important to ascertain whether there was a sufficient supply of 'Teriaca,' a medicine which, in the opinion of all Venetians, could not fail to cure the plague or any other sickness. The recipe for it, they believed, had come down from a Greek called Andromachos, and required a mixture of aromatic herbs, amber, and other ingredients, which were imported at great expense from distant Eastern countries. The State itself superintended the concoction of this universal panacea, lest its quality should in the least deteriorate, and lest the great reputation acquired for it throughout Europe should suffer. No stranger who could afford to buy it left Venice without taking at least a small supply, and so great were, or are, its virtues that it is made to this day, and sold at the same sign.

Cecchetti, Medicina.

A. Baschet, Souvenirs.

Mutinelli, Less.

But, to the stupefaction of the three 'Wise Men of the Plague,' Teriaca would not cure the malady, and even the sensible precautions of quarantine which they had taken came too late to be of any use. The malady was raging, and ran its fearful course to the terrible end. Fifty noble families were completely destroyed, not

leaving one of the name. It was only with difficulty that a meeting of the Great Council could be got together, and the Council of Forty was reduced to twenty members. In a few weeks Venice presented the aspect of a pestilent desert; and when at last the pest wore itself out, it was necessary to bring in from neighbouring provinces a great number of families, upon whom all those privileges were bestowed at once which were generally accorded only in consideration of some service to the Republic, or after a prolonged residence in Venetian territory.

The selection of the immigrants was conducted with the greatest prudence, and it may easily be believed that the great influx of new and energetic blood, of the same descent, was of vast benefit to the city and the Republic. It may even be asked whether, without this wholesome sifting and renewing of her people, Venice could have performed the prodigies of courage and endurance which not long afterwards turned the tide of the Chioggia war.

Andrea Dandolo did not long survive these events. Worn out with facing the storm, with fighting enemies by land and sea abroad, and pestilence at home, he died when barely fifty years of age, leaving to posterity the precious manuscript of his history, which has even now not been entirely published. His Chronicle is one of the richest sources of information for the history of the fourteenth century.

Dandolo was succeeded by Marino Faliero.



ZATTERE, THE MORNING MIST

XI

CONSPIRACY OF MARINO FALIERO

The conspiracy of Bocconio has no very distinct character; it was neither an attempt at popular revolution, nor an effort on the part of the burghers against the people on the one hand and the aristocracy on the other. The outbreak under the leadership of Tiepolo and the Quirini, although they succeeded in giving it the appearance of a democratic movement, was in reality an attempt on the part of an ambitious noble to seize

the power wielded by the Doge Pietro Gradenigo, a man perhaps as ambitious as Tiepolo himself, but who at all events had been regularly elected to be the head of the Republic. The third conspiracy of which we find an account during the fourteenth century was undoubtedly meant to overthrow the Government, and to gather into one hand the whole of that authority which belonged equally to all members of the same class. The conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero has been related in many ways—as a romance, as a poem, as an instance of political passion, but very generally without a careful consideration of the facts. Most writers represent the old Doge as driven to betray his country by outrageous calumnies against his wife, invented by some youths of the aristocracy. Others, like Byron, believe that he wished to free his country from the petty tyranny and real oppression it suffered under the complicated system of councils :—

> We will renew the times of truth and justice,
> Condensing in a fair, free commonwealth,
> Not rash equality, but equal rights.

In his dramatic upholding of what he believed the truth, Byron was so far carried away as to cause the Doge to be decapitated in 1355 on the steps of the 'Giants' Staircase,' which was not constructed until 1485, between the two colossal statues set up there by Jacopo Sansovino in 1554. A careful examination of historical documents would seem to destroy almost altogether the common version of the tragedy.

Marino Faliero was born between 1280 and 1285, the son of Marco Faliero and Beriola Loredan. He belonged to the Falieri of the Santi Apostoli, so called from the name of the district in which they lived, to distinguish them from the Falieri who lived in other parts of the city, some of whom did not belong to the same family, and were not even nobles. He was called Marino Junior, in order not to confuse him with an uncle of the same name, who was known as Marino Senior.

Lazzarini, Marin Falier in Arch. Veneto.

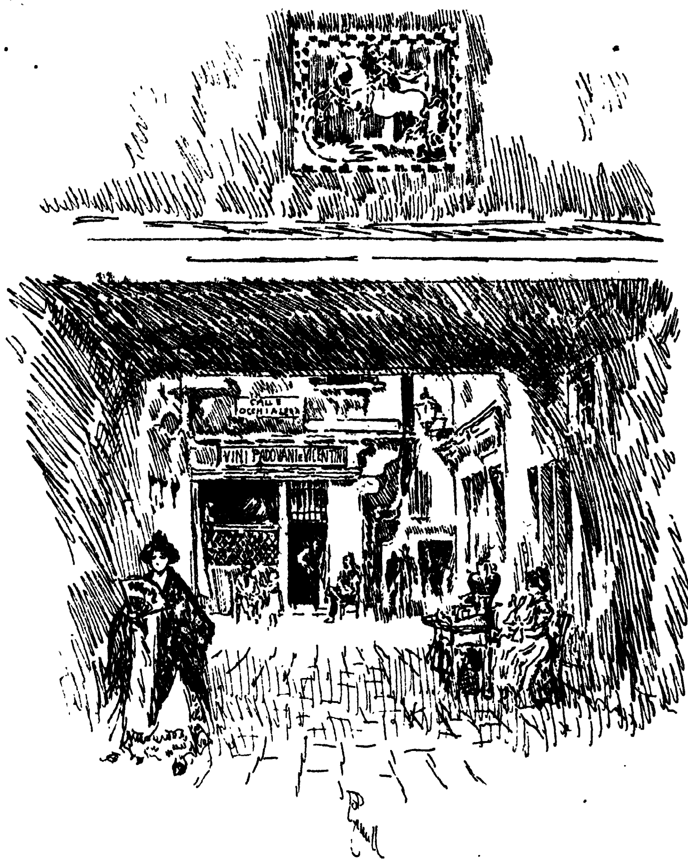
Very little is recorded concerning his youth, but Lazzarini finds that his education was not very different from that of his peers, and was probably conducted by the sort of tutor then called a Master of Grammar; and that the young man must have become familiar from his earliest years with navigation, commerce, and the public affairs of the Republic.

At twenty years of age, by the privilege of the Barbarella, he was present at the assemblies of the Great Council; and when little more than thirty we find him one of the heads of the Ten, and he constantly appears in that capacity, and by alternation in the office of 'Inquisitor.' When exercising the functions of the latter, which may seem strange for one who in later time was to betray his country, he was charged, with another of the Ten, Andrea Michiel, to bring about, 'rapidly and diligently,' the ruin and death of Bajamonte Tiepolo and Pietro Quirini, who had already been in exile ten years; and he was authorised to spend ten

thousand lire of the 'piccoli,' or about £1600 sterling, in order to kill the first, and two thousand for killing the second.

Marino Faliero was a man of uncommon intelligence and resistless energy, as may be seen from the fact that the Republic, which certainly had a considerable choice of such men, constantly made use of him, sometimes giving him important posts at home, and sometimes as ambassador to the Pope or to foreign sovereigns; sometimes, again, as military governor or podestà of cities under the Venetian dominion, once at least commissioning him as commander-in-chief of the fleet. He was the first podestà of Treviso after that city became subject to Venice in 1339. A podestà was a sort of foreign governor, whom the independent commonwealths chose for themselves in order to assure the peaceable execution of their own laws without party prejudice; but conquered towns were required by their conquerors to submit to this officer. He was generally named for two years; he was not allowed to bring his wife or children with him; he could not absent himself for one day without special permission from the Senate; he was never to form any close friendship among the citizens, lest his impartial authority should be compromised by his surroundings. There was a podestà in almost every city of central and northern Italy, and Venice imposed one on each city she conquered. But he had no power to change the statutes of the city in his charge; his office was to see that those statutes were approved by the Most Serene Republic and were properly enforced.

When it seemed likely that an understanding might be brought about between the Venetians and the



CALLE OCCHIALERA

Genoese, the former sent Marino Faliero, being well aware that the result of the mission would depend

largely upon the character and gifts of the ambassador; but, owing to quarrels which broke out in the East between merchants of the rival Republics, the embassy was abandoned in 1350, and Faliero turned back before reaching the end of his journey. At the siege of Zara he distinguished himself so much that a contemporary chronicler attached to his name the epithet Audax, the Brave; and when in 1352 the fleet commanded by Niccolò Pisani left Venice to sail against the Genoese, Marino Faliero was designated beforehand to succeed the admiral in case the latter should fall ill. He was in no less esteem abroad than in the Republic itself. The Carrara, who were lords of Padua, chose him twice, in 1338 and 1350, as podestà of their city.

A chronicler of Treviso in the fifteenth century accuses Faliero of having been exceedingly overbearing and violent, and most historians have followed this writer. The latter narrates that when Faliero was podestà of Treviso in 1346, it was his duty on one occasion to assist at a procession of the 'Corpus Domini.' The Bishop came to the ceremony, carrying the sacrament and accompanied by the clergy, but kept the procession waiting so long that Faliero, losing his temper, gave the astonished prelate a resounding box on the ear, which was heard to the end of the church. No contemporary documents can be found to prove or disprove this tale, which may be historical or legendary, yet the chroniclers of the fourteenth century constantly reported such anecdotes, although the Venetians were ardent in their faith and generous in the endowment

of churches and convents. There is much evidence to prove that Faliero ruled his own family with despotic authority, as may be seen from many documents. He made marriages and distributed inheritances as he pleased, though it does not necessarily follow that he did so in an unlawful manner. On the contrary, in spite of his overbearing character, he seems to have enjoyed the esteem and affection of all the members of his house.

Petrarch, who, if not his friend, was at least an intimate acquaintance of his, wrote not long after his death that he had enjoyed during many years the reputation of a wise man, and Matteo Villani says that he was a man of high character, wise and magnanimous. The Giustiniani chronicle, which judged his conspiracy very harshly, admits that as a man he was generous, wise, and brave. The chronicler Caresini regrets that a man so virtuous by nature should have so far departed from virtue.

From evidence recently discovered, it appears that Marino Faliero had two wives, and some have even said that he had three. Of the two whose names we know, the first was Tommasina Contarini, and the other, who was afterwards the Dogess, was Ludovica Gradenigo. He had a daughter, Lucia, by the first wife, and no children by the second. Some of the later chroniclers, who may be said to have constructed the fable of Marino Faliero, say that the Dogess belonged to the house of Contarini, and it is not hard to understand how a superficial examination of the papers of that

time should either have confused the first wife with the second, or have confused the Doge Marino with Marino Ordelafo, who was his nephew, and dear to him as his own son. This confusion resulted in mistaking Cristina Contarini, who at the time of the conspiracy must have been young and beautiful, with the Dogess, who was then undoubtedly nearly forty-five years of age.

Andrea Dandolo died on the night of the seventh of September 1354; and on the day following steps were taken to begin the election of his successor, and to introduce as usual a number of corrections and improvements in the ducal oath of allegiance. The five correctors elected for the latter purpose, in a meeting of the Great Council from which all members under the age of thirty were excluded, presented on the next day the list of their proposed amendments. These were numerous, and were all intended to restrict the authority of the Doge, which was already sufficiently reduced. The yet unchosen successor of Dandolo was to be forbidden to receive an ambassador, or any foreign emissary, or to give any answer to such an one, except in the presence and with the approval of his counsellors and the heads of the Forty. On the same day, the ninth of September, at the ninth hour, the 'Arengo' was summoned, which was the General Assembly of the people, and which still gave the lower classes the illusion of participating in the affairs of state. This Assembly was now called upon to ratify the proposed changes in the ducal oath of allegiance.

Even before the commencement of the election there

was talk of Marino Faliero for the office; and he was at that time Venetian ambassador to Pope Innocent VI. in Avignon, being there to treat for peace with Genoa and the Visconti, lords of Milan. On the eleventh of September his name was pronounced before another assembly of the people, and contemporary historians say that his election was extremely well received by all classes of Venetians. Until the Doge-elect should reach the capital, it was decreed that the government should remain in the hands of the ducal counsellors and the heads of the Forty; two counsellors and one of the heads of the Forty remaining by turn constantly in the ducal palace. Faliero had left Avignon before he received notice of his election, so that he was in the neighbourhood sooner than was expected. On the twenty-eighth of September twelve ambassadors, chosen for each of the offices of the city, went out to meet him. Each one of these was accompanied by a noble and three young gentlemen, who altogether received daily a salary of forty ducats of gold. The actual value in gold of a Venetian ducat is now usually estimated at about fifteen shillings English money, rather less than the equivalent of the French twenty-franc piece. The purchasing power of the coin was, however, very much larger than at the present day.

The delegates met the Doge at Verona, and accompanied him thence to Padua, where the Carrara received them all with great honour. Taddeo Giustiniani, son of the podestà of Chioggia, met the whole company there with fifteen of the small

Rom. iii. 181.

barges called 'ganzaruoli,' splendidly decorated, in which the Doge embarked with all his company. On the fifth of October, at a small distance from Venice itself, he was met by the famous Bucentaur, which bore the ducal counsellors and a great number of nobles. A remarkable circumstance which accompanied this journey is narrated by Lorenzo dei Monaci, whom Lazzarini calls a grave and contemporary historian. The Doge, on reaching Venice, landed at the pier of Saint Mark's, instead of going to the other side, to the Riva della Paglia, according to former custom; and in order to reach the ducal palace he passed between the two columns where malefactors were often executed. At the time no one paid any attention to this, but after his tragic death the incident was reputed to have been a presage of the evil future; so that Petrarch, writing from Milan on the twenty-fourth of April 1355, a few days after the Doge had been decapitated, alludes to the fact in these words: 'Sinistro pede palatium ingressus,' *i.e.* 'Having entered the palace with ill-omened step.'

In the church of Saint Mark's he was presented to the people, and received the usual threefold laudation and salutation. It is worth noticing that Faliero was the last Doge who was saluted by the pompous title of 'Lord of a quarter and an eighth of the Roman Empire.' Then, according to the regular ceremonial, he was carried round the square amid the acclamations of the multitude, to whom he threw money, and at last he was crowned upon the landing of the staircase that

descended into the courtyard of the palace. This staircase was of stone, and led down from the hall of the Great Council to the story where was the covered loggia, and thence continued downwards in the open air, entering the courtyard, and following the same direction as the modern 'Giants' Staircase,' but at the opposite extremity. It was demolished in the fifteenth century. Upon the same landing of the staircase the Doge took the oath of allegiance, with the amendments of which we have already spoken, and we may well believe that the new restrictions contained in the 'Ducal Promise' were unwelcome to his despotic nature.

During the reign of Marino Faliero Venice continued the struggle with Genoa, and remained on the side of the Lombard League against the Visconti. The defeat of the Venetian fleet at Porto Longo, November 4, 1354, almost caused a panic in Venice, where it was expected that at any moment the Genoese would appear again before the Lido. The Doge and the Government, however, met the danger with energetic measures, obtained help from the neighbouring principalities, and vigilantly watched the more exposed outlying districts, such as Cape d'Istria and Zara; but the agitation in Venice was not wholly allayed, and the need of peace was felt more than ever. Charles IV., king of Bohemia and king of the Romans, who had recently descended into Italy in order to assume the imperial title, found it no easy matter to make terms between the parties. From Avignon also Pope Innocent

VI. was using every means to pacify the divers Italian states; but neither the Emperor nor the Pope were wholly successful, and in the winter of 1355 the con-



CAMPO S. MARIA NOVA

dition of affairs in Venice was such as to favour a conspiracy. It was not long, in fact, before the plot of Marino Faliero was discovered, and it turned out to be

the most important of those which darken the history of the fourteenth century.

Almost every one is acquainted with the legend of this conspiracy, and may compare it with the truth so far as a recent examination of the facts has made it known.

A grudge of long standing existed at that time between the houses of Faliero and Steno. In the summer of 1343 a certain Paolo Steno approached the house of Piero Faliero at San Maurizio late in the evening, and calling out a German serving-woman, called Elizabeth or Beta, with whom he seems to have been acquainted, he persuaded her with specious arguments, or with the promise of reward, to let him enter the room of Saray, who some say was the beautiful daughter of the master of the house, but who Romanin says was a slave, as her name would seem to indicate. A recent authority, Lazzarini, says that Romanin was mistaken; but however this may have been, Saray, who was taken by surprise, defended herself desperately, but could not escape the embraces of Paolo Steno. A regular action was brought against the latter, and a number of documents in the criminal archives of the Forty, dated in August and September 1343, prove that the culprit was condemned to be imprisoned a year in the lower dungeons called pozzi, and to pay a fine of three hundred lire. The German serving-woman, who had escaped beyond the frontier, was condemned in default to have her nose and her lips cut off, and was perpetually banished; an accomplice,

a servant in the house of Faliero, was imprisoned six months in the lower dungeons, and then banished. Three years later the mother of Saray, on her death, named 'Saray Steno' among her children in her will, and it would appear from this that Steno had satisfied justice and repaired his fault by marrying the girl; but in this case it is certain that he did not long survive the date of the deed, for before the conditions of the will could be fulfilled we find that Saray was already the wife of a certain Niccoletto Callencerio of Oderzo. It is impossible to say how far this incident was the cause of the hatred between the families of Faliero and Steno, but we may be sure that when Michel Steno insulted the Doge eleven years later he was already influenced by the existence of the family grudge.

On the tenth of November 1354 a request came before the Council of Forty to proceed against the authors of certain words written in the Hall of the Hearth in the ducal palace against the Doge's nephew. There is no mention of the Dogess. Amongst those cited to appear before the tribunal within eight days we find the name of a Steno called Micheletto, the diminutive of Michel, and son of the late Giovanni, coupled with that of Piero Bollani, as the principal authors of the insulting lines, and a certain Rizzardo Marioni is accused of having scrawled obscene symbols beside what his companions had written. Besides these, certain other noble youths were cited to appear, but were acquitted for lack of proof that they had taken part in the deed. It must be taken for granted that Romanin

was not acquainted with the document cited by Lazzarini, since he says that no proofs exist that Steno was either accused or punished.

Micheletto Steno was condemned to be imprisoned during a few days in the lower dungeons; Piero Bollani and Rizzardo Marioni got off with less than a week's confinement.

Tradition, as corroborated by the Doge's own words afterwards, justifies us in believing that Faliero complained of the lenity shown to the culprits; but though he might have been displeased, it would have been impossible that he should be astonished. Since the insult was directed against the Doge or his nephew as private individuals, and not against the head of the Republic, a discriminating tribunal of Venice could only treat the affair as if it had happened between any other members of the nobility. Venice never incarnated any 'divine right' in the person of her Doge, and Faliero must have known that though a single word of slight against the honour of the 'Lord Duke' might cost him who uttered it both his eyes and his tongue, as happened in the same year to a certain Niccolò Cestello and to another Micheletto of Murano, even a grave insult against the person of the Doge was never legally punished by more than two months' imprisonment, and generally by a shorter term and a small fine. The legend built up upon the later accounts says that Micheletto Steno was the head of the Forty, *i.e.* President of the Senate, when he wrote the insult of which he was convicted; but we have

clear proof that at the time he was hardly more than twenty years of age, so that he had not even the right to vote at the meetings of the Great Council; and no one could belong to the Senate who was under thirty, much less be the head of that formidable body. So far as the Dogess is concerned, chroniclers and novelists have described her as taking part in a dance at the time, whereas she was a woman already of middle age, and her name is never mentioned in any of the numerous documents regarding the famous trial. There is one more argument against the fable that the insult was directed against her. The Venetian tribunals were extremely severe in all cases where the honour of a woman was touched. The mere fact of laying a hand on the shoulder of a woman not the man's own wife or relative might be punished with a very heavy fine and many months of imprisonment, and a libellous writing against a noble lady was punished with two months in the pozzi and a fine of one hundred ducats. It would seem to follow that if Steno's offence had been committed against the first matron in Venice, the tribunal would not have treated the matter with that indulgence of which the Doge complained on his own account. Moreover, it should be noted that Marino Faliero was elected on the eleventh of September 1354, and that the date of the trial was the tenth of November of the same year; but the legendary account says it was on the Thursday before Lent, which cannot come earlier than February and may be as late as March, that the insulting words were written. The scandal must

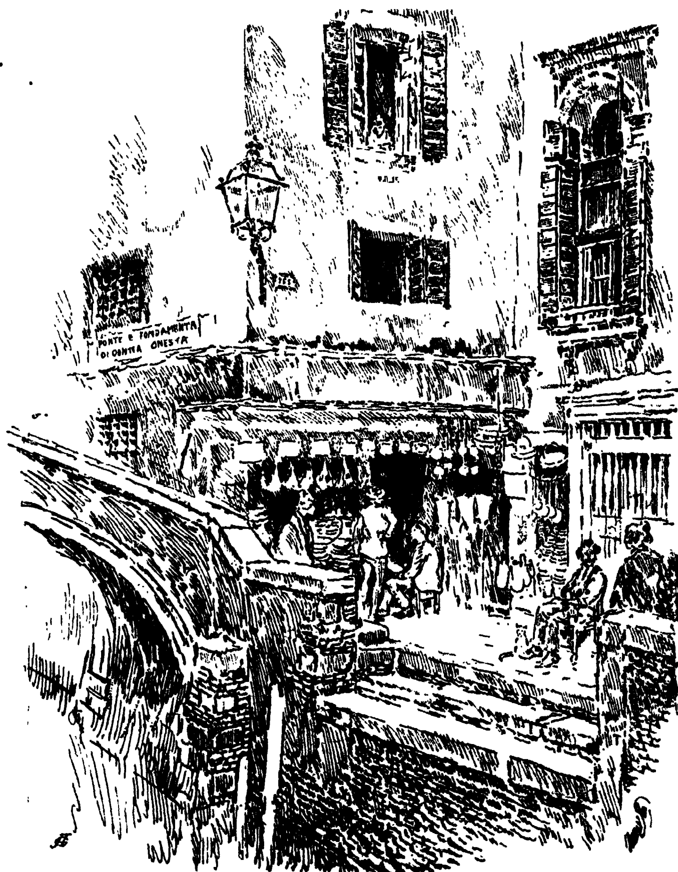
have taken place very early in November, and probably happened during the festival held in the ducal palace on the occasion of the marriage of Santino Faliero and Regina Dandolo, a nephew and niece of the Doge, a marriage, consequently, for which the papal dispensation would have been necessary. This hypothesis would in some measure explain the fact that the writing was directed against the Doge and one of his nephews.

Whatever the true facts were in the Steno-Faliero trials, it is certain that the Doge entertained feelings of the strongest resentment against the aristocracy, against the judges, and, on the whole, against all the decrees of the Government. There is no doubt but that the young nobles of that day deserved the indignation they excited in the minds of sensible people, for during several years past their insolence had become boundless, and they went to all lengths of violence, and worse, sometimes even making use of false keys to get into houses that were closed against them, and sparing neither matron nor maid. The lower classes especially suffered by their outrageous conduct in word and deed, and when the Doge conceived the idea of breaking down the power of the aristocrats, he fully believed he might count upon the sympathy and help of the people.

Now when the war with the Genoese was still raging, a certain Bertuccio Isarello, a sea-captain, and Giovanni Dandolo, a patrician, who was one of the superintendents charged with getting war-vessels ready

for sea, got into a violent discussion. To be a sea-captain in those days not only indicated great energy and personal courage, but also implied a certain amount of consideration. Isarello had reached his present position after a life of many labours and adventures. He had been a merchant in the Rialto for a year; he had then been the navigating officer of a vessel trading to the East, belonging to a certain Jacopello Lombardo, and after that he had been promoted to be captain, or 'patrono,' of a galley, the property of Marin Michiel, with a salary of five lire of grossi monthly (about twenty-five shillings), and permission to take with him on his voyages three families as passengers. Like most other sea-captains of whom we have any account in the archives, Isarello owned several houses in Venice, and possessed considerable prestige among the seafaring class. The account of the incident here given is taken from the contemporary chronicle of de' Monaci. It happened that in the course of manning a number of ships of war Dandolo had business with this Captain Isarello, and, finding him unexpectedly obstinate upon some point of which we have no account, proceeded to enforce his arguments with a box on the ear. The offended captain left the office where this took place, and told his friends what had happened. They promised at once to support him if he wished to be avenged. Accompanied by them, Isarello thereupon went at once to the square before the ducal palace, and walked up and down nursing his wrath until Dandolo himself should pass. The Doge and his counsellors,

being apprised of the matter, sent for the captain and had from his own lips an account of the injury he had



PONTE E FONDAMENTA DI DONNA ONESTA

suffered; but while they promised him every satisfaction which the law would allow, they severely reproved him

for having dared to think of taking vengeance in person.

The Doge, however, on hearing Isarello's story, recognised in him an instrument that might be useful against the aristocracy; and sending for him privately on the following night, received him in his own apartment, and laid before him the plan which he had been maturing for some time.

The most reliable accounts say that within a few hours Isarello gathered twenty conspirators, each of whom promised to furnish forty armed men; but of these twenty heads, only Isarello himself, Filippo Calendario, his father-in-law, erroneously stated to have been the architect who restored the ducal palace, but who was in reality only a master stone-cutter in the work, and two or three other trusty friends, were aware that the Doge himself was the prime mover in the conspiracy, the others supposing that the only object of the movement was to punish the nobles for their overbearing conduct, and to force the Government to the better administration of justice. During a few days the principal conspirators came by night to the ducal palace in order to prepare their plan of action. Meanwhile, in order to increase the unpopularity of the aristocracy, they practised a singular deceit. Two or three of them wandered about the city in the evening, apparently disguised as nobles, insulting the plebeians whom they met, and singing low songs under the windows of honest artisans' wives; then separating, they loudly bade each other good-night, calling each other

by the names of the most illustrious Venetian houses so that the offended persons supposed they had been annoyed by the fashionable young good-for-nothings of the highest nobility. Meanwhile the conspirators discussed various means for getting possession of the city, and it was finally agreed that they should all meet, fully armed, on the night of the fifteenth of April 1355 in the Square of Saint Mark, before the ducal palace, when the Doge would cause the great bell to ring the alarm, and news would be bruited abroad among the people that the Genoese were at the mouth of the harbour with fifty galleys. Thereupon it was expected that the nobles would flock to the palace, as they always did in cases of danger, to meet in council, and the conspirators would be able to kill them without difficulty as they arrived. After the massacre, they intended to proclaim the absolute sovereignty of the Doge, who bound himself to confer all the important offices of the State upon men belonging to the working-classes. The plan failed, apparently for two reasons.

In the first place, it appears that among those whom the Doge invited to take part in the conspiracy was a certain Niccolò Zucuol, a close friend of the house of Faliero, a rich citizen of burgher origin, who was allied by marriage with the most noble families in Venice. The Doge, knowing that he could trust this man, revealed to him the whole plan, but Zucuol was opposed to it, and by prayers and arguments caused Marino Faliero to waver in his intention. Some chroniclers say that this honest Niccolò Zucuol obtained

authority from the Doge to dissolve the conspiracy, and to induce the conspirators, if he could, to give up all idea of vengeance; others say that his arguments only frightened the Doge for the time, without really shaking his resolution.

Secondly, we find that a certain Vendramin, who was in the fur trade, made revelations to a sponsor of his, Niccolò Lion, a noble, in order to save him from the general massacre of the nobles, which was a part of the conspiracy. This Lion, who was a senator, heard the story late at night in his own house, and lost no time in acting on the information. He dressed in haste, and with no companion save the fur-merchant, boldly entered the Doge's apartment, told him that he knew the truth, and threatened to bring him to account before his counsellors.

Marino Faliero did not lose his self-possession in this sudden turn of affairs, but coolly pretended to pity the credulity of the old senator. He even had the audacity to say that this was not the first he had heard of what he called an egregious calumny; that he himself had made most careful inquiry into the conspiracy, and had assured himself that there was not a word of truth in the story. Lion, however, placed no faith in the Doge's statements, and insisted so forcibly that the ducal counsellors should be called in that the Doge was obliged to yield.

The chronicler Matteo Villani observes that it was here that the Doge lost his head, because he might easily have locked up Lion and Vendramin, or might



RAMO DELLA SCUOLA

even have murdered them, and thus gained the time necessary for putting his plans into execution. It soon became known that the Privy Council had been summoned at that unusual hour, and this alone spread alarm through Venice. A number of nobles accompanied the six counsellors to the palace, and groups of curious and inquisitive persons gathered in the neighbourhood of Saint Mark's. It was known that during the last few days, and under various pretexts, there had been frequent gatherings of seafaring men, and many of the nobles had noticed the threatening attitude of the working-men they passed in the street, and had even heard menacing speeches indistinctly spoken when they had gone by, though they had paid little attention to such matters at the time. But now, while the Privy Council was sitting within the palace, the whole population felt a sort of premonition of a terrible mystery, and of some great event that was not far off. Meanwhile two gentlemen of the house of Contarini requested to be immediately admitted to the presence of the Council. They said that a friend of theirs had been asked only a few hours previously by a friend of Filippo Calendario to take part in a conspiracy which was about to break out. The person they referred to was immediately called, and turned out to be a seafaring man named Marco Negro, who was able to give chapter and verse for all he stated. His story at once exhibited the conduct of the Doge in the strongest light. Following the example of the two Contarini, many more persons presented to the ducal counsellors

very grave accusations against the Doge. Without losing time, and before daybreak, officers were sent out to arrest all persons suspected of having joined in the conspiracy. Amongst the first that were brought to the palace was Calendario himself and one of his accomplices, named Zuan da Corso. The latter, having been put to the torture, confessed everything, and Calendario, without waiting until similar pressure had been brought upon him, disclosed everything he knew, without the least attempt to hide the responsibility of the Doge. As soon as the Doge's guilt was clear, the Council decided to proceed with its deliberations without regard to him, and immediately called in the Council of Ten in order to divide with the latter the responsibilities of government and justice. Niccolò Faliero, who was a near relative of the Doge's, was not allowed to take part in the deliberations, that being the rule in such cases.

Word was immediately sent to all the nobles then in Venice to arm themselves, and to bring their servants and retainers armed to the squares near their habitations. During the whole day and the following night these armed men remained constantly on the watch, ready to act under the orders of the Privy Council at a moment's notice. Eighty or ninety nobles and trusty citizens continually rode through the city from post to post to preserve order and unity.

After the first hours of agitation arrangements were made for a regular succession of watches at all the principal points. Meanwhile some of the conspirators

sought safety in flight, while some were arrested in their houses. Isarello was taken in a garden immediately after the first revelations of the conspiracy. Some of the other chiefs were chased as far as Chioggia and brought back. On the same day Filippo Calendàrio and Isarello were hanged between the red columns of the loggia of the old palace, from which the Doge usually assisted at the Carnival festivities. Others suffered the same sentence, and as their bodies were not taken down directly after they were dead, there was soon a row of eleven corpses hanging from the balcony, beginning with those of the chief conspirators, who had been hanged with gags in their mouths lest they should cry out to the people. The minor conspirators were spared this indignity.

The Doge during this time was under guard in his own apartments, until at last one counsellor, Giovanni Mocenigo, one inquisitor, Luca da Lezze, and one avogador, Orio Pasqualigo, entered together to examine him. As the Council was not willing to accept the sole responsibility of the trial, a committee was chosen, consisting of twenty nobles of the most ancient and illustrious families of Venice; these, however, were only to have a vote in consultation, but not upon the final sentence. It was in this way that the 'Zonta,' or supplementary committee of the Council of Ten, was constituted, and its usefulness was so readily recognised that from that time on it was always called to assist in cases of unusual importance. It followed that the court, before which the Doge was to be tried, consisted of

thirty-seven persons, *i.e.* nine of the Council of Ten, since Niccolò Faliero could not sit, six ducal counsellors, twenty of the committee of nobles, and two avogadori of the Commonwealth. The High Chancellor, I presume, however, must also have been present; in which case the court consisted of thirty-eight. Contemporary documents give us the names of all these judges except the last.

On the seventeenth the three individuals who had been with Marino Faliero by night opened the case. The accusations having been heard, examined, and discussed by the court, the following proposal was made:— 'Does it seem to you that from what has been said and read, proceedings should be taken against Marino Faliero, the Doge, for attempting to betray the State and Commonwealth of Venice?' Following the so-called Rite of the Council of Ten, the heads and the avogadori of the Commune proposed the sentence, and this was discussed until evening. It was finally decided that Marino Faliero should be beheaded on the landing of the stone staircase, where he had sworn the ducal oath of allegiance. It was further decreed by the sentence that all his goods should be confiscated, with the exception of two thousand lire of grossi, equal to five hundred pounds, which he was to be allowed to leave as he would by will. All that now remained was to announce to the Doge the sentence of death, and to strip him of the ducal insignia. Giovanni Gradenigo was charged with this duty, the same man who was presently to take his place upon the ducal throne. He

was of the family of the Dogess; and it is possible, though I think extremely improbable, that the Council intended to send to the condemned man a person who might in some measure show him sympathy in his last moments. If the tribunal really had any such intention, it must be admitted that the manner in which it was carried out left much to be desired. A chronicler of a later time says that he heard the story told as follows:—'Messer Zuan Gradenigo was the person who received the orders of the chiefs of the Ten to go to the Doge; and he found him walking up and down in the hall of his house (the palace). At once he said to him, "Give me that cap." And he, the Doge, with his hands, gave it up, not suspecting a sentence of death. And he (Gradenigo) said to him, "You are condemned to have your head cut off within the hour." Having heard which he (the Doge) was in great anguish, and could not answer anything.'

It is certain that Marino Faliero immediately made his will by the hand of a notary. This document is still wholly preserved, and is the best argument that could be produced of the honour of the Dogess. By it the Doge, who was about to die, leaves his wife sole executrix of his last will; leaving it also to her to do for his soul what she could with what he left her, in the way of pious services and charities.

About sunset the condemned man, deprived of all his ducal insignia, came down from his apartment to the landing of the staircase, and on the same spot where he had sworn, *bona fide*, *sine fraude*, to up-

hold the constitution of the State, his head was cut off.

The bloody sword with which the execution was performed was shown to the people from the loggia of the palace.

The following quotation is taken from an anonymous chronicler of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, quoted by Lazzarini, and gives some further details of the end of Marino Faliero, though it is impossible to guarantee them as wholly trustworthy:—

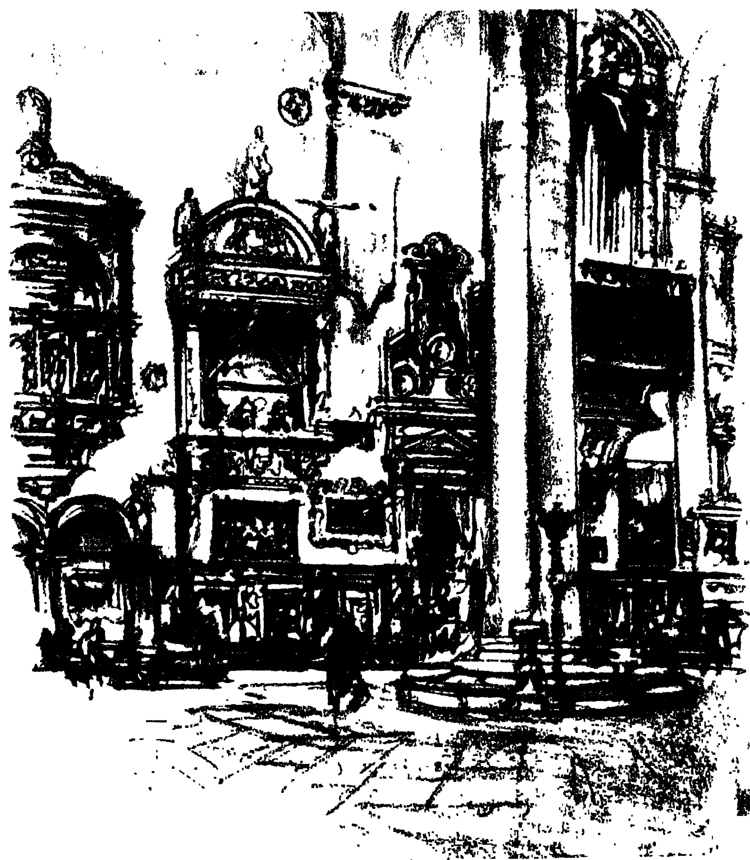
'You must know that when this Marino Faliero was condemned to death, the tocsin was sounded; and that bell which rang for him was never rung again. It was put away by the Council of Ten, who ordained that if any one should propose that it should ever be rung again hereafter, his head should be cut off. And wit ye that the said bell was not at that time in the bell-tower of Saint Mark, but was in the palace; and its use was to give a signal to the "pregadi"; and afterwards it was put out of use, and taken away and hidden. However, not very long after that, it was hung in the bell-tower of Saint Mark's, and it is the bell which has no tongue, no rope, and no lever; and the said bell is in the shape of a hat, as may be seen to the present day; and is reserved for some like princely occasion.'

The body of the unfortunate man was laid upon a matting, with the head at the feet, in one of the halls of the ducal palace, and remained there during twenty-four hours, during which time the people were freely admitted to gaze on the mournful spectacle. On the

evening of the eighteenth, without honours and without any procession, it was laid in a coffin, and taken by boat as far as San Giovanni e Paolo, to be laid in the tomb of the Faliero family. This was an enormous sarcophagus of Istria stone, of truly huge dimensions, upon which were carved the arms of the Falieri.

In 1812 Giovanni Casoni, a student who was collecting all possible information regarding the Arsenal and other principal points in Venice, was in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo when this sarcophagus was opened. It was quite full of human skeletons, placed in layers, which were very carefully taken out and laid upon the pavement of the court, in order to be transported elsewhere. When almost at the end of the operation, a decapitated skeleton was found, with the skull between the legs. Casoni says that he felt instantly, with intimate certainty, that the remains were those of the Doge, Marino Faliero. 'At that moment,' he says, 'I was far from recalling memories of the Doge, and did not in the least suspect that I should ever have found his ashes, or held his skull in my hands.' With admirable simplicity the writer remarks that it was only his regard for the regulations of the Health Office, and his reluctance to get into trouble with the representatives of the city government, which prevented him from immediately taking possession of the skull and carrying it off.

Lord Byron, in 1819, knew nothing of this discovery, and making inquiries about the tomb of the beheaded Doge in San Giovanni e Paolo, a priest showed him a small tomb built into the wall, and tried to persuade



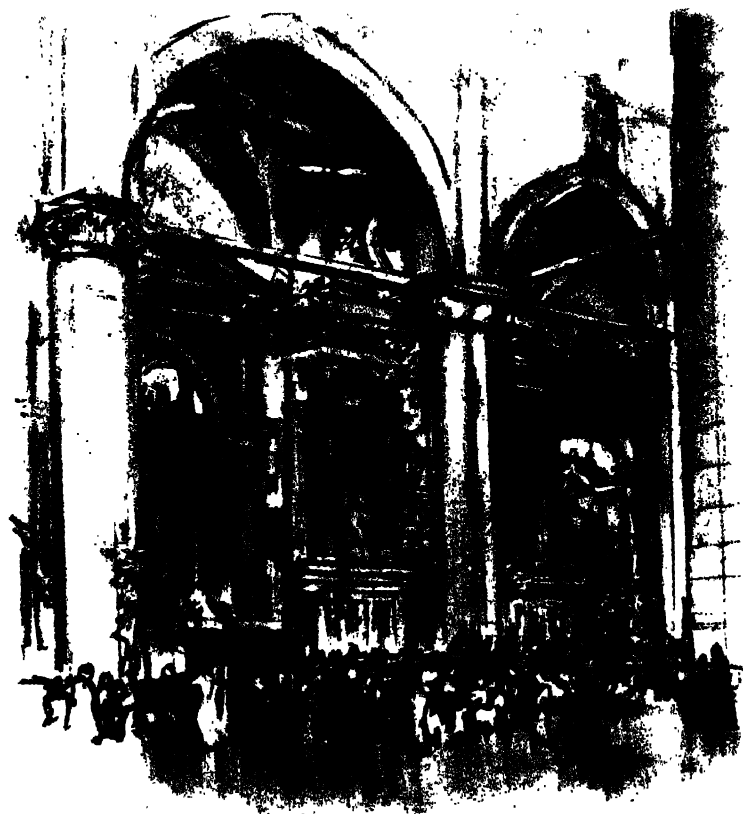
him that this was Marino Faliero's last resting-place—a matter concerning which the poet expressed considerable doubt.

The great stone sarcophagus spoken of by Giovanni Casoni was used afterwards during many years as a reservoir by the apothecary of the Civil Hospital, and is to-day in the outer loggia of the Correr Museum, bearing no trace of inscription or arms. The latter were probably chipped off.

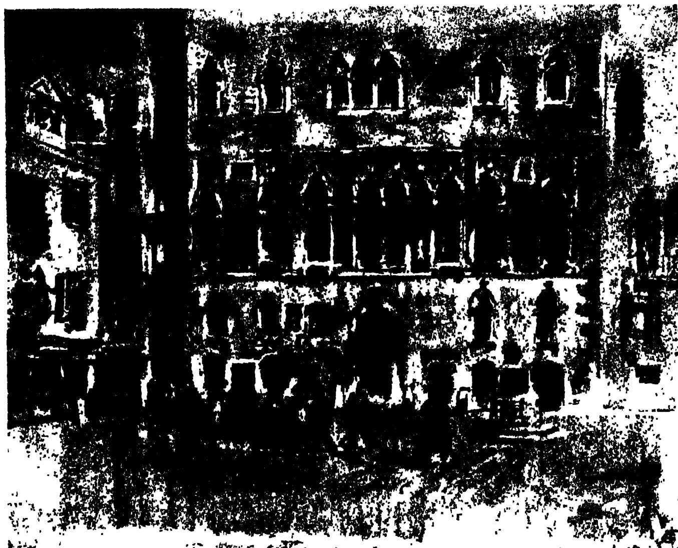
With regard to the absence from the archives of the Council of Ten of all documents relating to the trial of Marino Faliero, many historians, among whom are Romanin and Rawdon Brown, are inclined to suppose that it was not entered in the acts of the Council, owing to what they call a certain praiseworthy shame on the part of the judges, which hindered them from inserting the name of the head of the Republic among those of other condemned persons. There are sufficient reasons and sufficient proofs, however, for supposing that the whole account of the trial was set down in a special book, which had no place in the regular series of the archives of the Council; and that this volume was either lost, or was burned in one of the fires which have at different times done damage in the ducal palace. The official report was evidently known to the old chroniclers, who translated long passages from it, from the original Latin into the vulgar tongue. This volume is referred to in a marginal note found in a document of 1355, referring to the conspiracy—'Ponatur in libro processum.'

The Council of Ten was never subject to such praiseworthy crises of shame; and the secretary of the Council, as Lazzarini observes, would have been very much astonished if he could have had cognisance of the conjectures which our modern sentimentalism would form regarding the facts. A number of other documents are missing from the archives of the Council or Ten, of which the absence does not suggest either a poetical interpretation, or any explanation of a political character; the papers were simply lost.

The unfortunate Dogess, who perhaps quitted the ducal palace with the body of her beheaded husband, was obliged soon afterwards to leave his own house, where she had taken refuge to hide her grief. The municipality took possession of all property which had belonged to Marino Faliero, but restored to his widow the whole amount of her dowry, and two thousand lire left her by the will of the deceased. The wretched widow was obliged to swear that she did not keep any object of value that had belonged to her husband; but the Council restored to her a little brooch of gold, with a silver pendant, which had been improperly confiscated, since it had come to her from her own family. Furthermore, certain objects were returned to her which she and her sister Engoldisia had inherited from Fiordalise Gradenigo, their mother. The poor woman at first retired to the convent of Saint Lawrence, in the district of San Severo; soon afterwards she went to Verona, where she had some lands, but at last she established herself in a house of her own in Venice



During many years she occupied herself altogether in charities. Little by little her intelligence began to give way, as is amply proved by the great number of wills she made, which are still extant. These all prove that she was not only deeply attached to the relatives of her husband, but that it was her intention to be more generous to them than to her own, especially to Federigo Giustiniani, son of Marino Faliero's daughter by his first wife. In one of her wills, probably executed at the instigation of some nephew, she says that she may change her mind, and says that the only will of hers which is to be considered valid is the one which begins 'Libera animam meam, Domine'; which, as Lazzarini says, sounds like a cry from the heart of the unhappy woman, tormented throughout her long and sad old age by relations who gave her no peace, and expected to profit largely by her wealth.



CAMPO S. AGNELLO

XII

THE SUCCESSORS OF MARINO FALIERO

Giovanni Gradenigo, who succeeded Marino Faliero, was fortunate enough to conclude a treaty of peace with
1355. the Genoese; and Giovanni Dolfin, the
Rom. iii. 194. next Doge after him, showed some skill in obtaining from the Emperor the recognition of Venice's suzerainty over the territory of Treviso. It was on this occasion that the lord of Sench arbitrarily threw into prison two Venetian ambassadors, as I

have told in speaking of the treatment of strangers. The immediate effect of the outrage was to rouse in the highest degree the resentment of Venice against the Duke of Austria and his vassal, and matters were at a critical pitch when the Doge died.

Rom. iii. 209.

The electors quickly agreed upon a Gradenigo, a Dandolo, a Cornaro, and a Contarini as candidates for the ducal dignity; but before they had come to a choice between these news was brought that Lorenzo Celsi, the 'Captain of the Gulf,' had taken a number of Genoese vessels with contraband cargoes. By one of those sudden caprices which have always affected the minds of electors, the hero of the hour at once became the only candidate on whom every one could agree. Celsi was not of the highest nobility and was barely fifty years of age, but these objections were insignificant compared with the prestige he now enjoyed. The choice fell upon him by unanimous consent, and his election was announced to the people almost at the moment when the report of his victories was discovered to be a fabrication. Yet, almost incredible as it must seem, his election to the throne caused no discontent in spite of this chilling disillusionment.

Rom. iii. 211.

At that time he was cruising in the waters of Candia, and a deputation of twelve nobles departed to inform him of his election, while a special council assumed the management of affairs until his coming.

An incident marked his arrival which, if not important, is memorable as having caused a modification in

the adornment of the ducal bonnet. Lorenzo Celsi landed at the Ponte della Paglia on the twenty-first of August 1361, and proceeded to the palace through the midst of a dense crowd, in which every man uncovered his head as the Doge passed, except one. Celsi's aged father could not admit that an old man should take off his hat to his own son, and entirely refused to do so. But the Doge, who was a diplomatist, found means to reconcile his father's prejudice with the rules of Venetian ceremonial. He fastened a small golden cross upon the front of his cap, and explained to his stiff-necked parent that it was no derogation of dignity for an old man to salute the sacred symbol.

Celsi also introduced the custom by which the Doge wore a dress of pure white when he appeared in public at any of the festivals kept by the Church in honour of the Virgin Mary, and this innovation found favour with most of his successors.

His reign, though short, was brilliant. He received the friendly visit of the Duke of Austria, of which mention has been made, and which brought about excellent results. The King of Cyprus also spent a short time in Venice during the reign, when he made his journey through Europe to preach a crusade against the Turks. The most important event which occurred under Lorenzo Celsi, however, was the Cretan war.

Rom. iii. 217.

The turbulent spirit of the natives of the island, and the excessive love of independence exhibited by the Venetian nobles, to whom the Republic had granted

fiefs in Candia, had brought matters to the verge of a revolution. The people flatly declined to pay tribute to the mother city, and strongly resented the remonstrances made by the Venetian Government through Donato Dandolo, the governor of Crete.

At last, when he demanded the payment of a tax which had been voted in order to strengthen the fortifications of the harbour, the Cretans replied that they would not pay a farthing until they had sent a deputation of twenty intelligent men to Venice, who should lay before the Senate a statement of the so-called rights of the colony. With more readiness than prudence, one of the governor's Council answered that there were not twenty intelligent men in the island.

The observation may not have been altogether unjust, judging from the total lack of sense afterwards shown by the Cretans, but it had the immediate and not surprising effect of irritating them, and the standard of revolt was raised within the hour. The flag of Saint Mark was torn down and replaced by one bearing the image of Saint Titus, the protector of the island, and before long the two parties were fighting under the war-cries of 'Saint Titus!' and 'Saint Mark!' the noble colonists and the natives on the one side, and the governor and his soldiers on the other.

Venice at first attempted to recall the island to its allegiance by pacific embassies, but these were repulsed with indignity and insult, and a fleet of thirty-three galleys, carrying six thousand men, was despatched

under Luchino dal Verme, a noble of Verona. The Candiotes had appealed in vain to the Genoese for help, the arch-enemies of their mother-country, and being left to their own resources they exhibited neither courage nor skill. In three days six thousand men reduced the hundred cities of the island to submission, and, after executing the ringleaders and taking due precautions against a fresh revolt, the victor set sail for Venice.

Petrarch was in the city at the time, and in one of his letters he has left a brilliant and poetic account of the triumph that followed.

Lettere senili di Petrarca (Basle) i. 782, quoted by G. R. Michiel.

It chanced that I was leaning at my window towards the hour of sixte, and mine eyes were turned toward the open sea; and I talked with the Archbishop of Patras, whom I did once love as a brother, and whom now I venerate as it were a well-beloved father. Then I saw entering the harbour a great ship, a galley, all decked with green branches, and it came rowed by many rowers. Now when we saw this, we ceased from talking; for the crew of the ship were of joyous mien, and they swung the oars with such right goodwill that we guessed them to be bearers of glad tidings. The sailors all wore crowns of leaves on their heads, and in their hands they waved banners, and they that stood in the bows shouted joyfully. Then the sentinel who watched on the top of the first tower forthwith made signal to give warning that a ship from abroad was in sight, and all the people together, full of curiosity, went over to Lido. As the ship came nearer we saw also trophies of war set up on her forward part; for surely this was the news of a victory which they were bringing in, but in what war it had been won, or in what battle, or at what stormed city, we knew not.

When the messengers had landed they went before the Great Council, and there we learned that which we had not dared to believe nor even to hope; for our enemies were all dead or taken prisoners or put to flight, and the honest citizens were freed out of slavery, the cities also were won back, and all the island of Candia had submitted to the Republic. So the war was over without striking a blow, and peace had been got with glory.

Petrarch's logic here evidently went to pieces in the storm of his satisfaction, for he speaks of a bloodless victory immediately after telling his correspondent that all the enemies of the Republic were slain or prisoners.

The Doge Lorenzo Celsi [here the poet indulges in a pun connecting 'Celsi' with 'excelsus'], unless my love for him has deceived me altogether, is a man of most noble heart, of purest life, one who follows all the virtues, most wonderfully pious and devoted to his country; and when he learned the good news he openly gave thanks to God, thereby showing the people that in every happy event man must acknowledge the divine hand, and dispose his own happiness under the protecting shield of faith. And prayers were offered throughout the city, but were especially in the basilica dedicated to the Evangelist Saint Mark. . . .

Now the whole feast ended with two pageants; but I confess that I know not by what name to call them, and so I shall describe them in such manner that thou mayest easily understand them. The one was, as it were, a race and the other a combat; and both were on horseback, the first without reins, and only with staves and banners, that it seemed to be some military exercise; but in the second game arms were needed, and it was like unto a real battle. Both in the one and in the other we marvelled at the gifts of the Venetians, who

are not only wonderful sailers of ships, but are also very skilled in all those exercises which belong to the art of war.

For they showed such experience of riding and such deep knowledge of the handling of arms, and such endurance of fatigue, that one might set them up for examples to other warlike nations. The two games were held in that square of which I deem there is not the like in the world, that is over against the marble and gold front of the temple of Saint Mark.

No stranger had a share in the first of the games, but four-and-twenty nobles, the goodliest and most richly clad, kept for themselves this part of the pageants. . . .

It was a good sight to see so many young men, in clothes of purple and gold, curbing and spurring their well-shod steeds, all shiningly caparisoned, that seemed hardly to touch earth in their swift course. These young men obeyed the gesture of their chief with such precision that as the first reached the goal and left the field, a second took his place on the track, and then a third, and so on till the first began again, so well that they kept up the racing all day long, and that at evening one might have believed that there had been but one cavalier who rode; and while they ran thou wouldest have seen now the gilded tips of their staves flying through the air, and now thou couldest have heard their red flags stiffening in the breeze with a sound as of wings.

One might scarce believe what multitudes thronged in the square of Saint Mark's on that day. There were both sexes and all ages and every class. The Doge himself was on the terrace which is built on the front of the church, with many nobles; from its height he saw almost at his feet all that moved in the square below. Thus he was in the midst of those four gilt horses, the work of an ancient and unknown craftsman, that look ready to measure themselves against living coursers, and seem to paw the air. Lest the summer sun should dazzle the eyes, curtains of many colours had been hung here and

there. I myself was bidden, as often the Doge deigns that I should be, and he made me sit at his right. . . . The great square, the church, the towers, the roofs, the porticoes, the windows, were all crowded with lookers-on. At the right a high platform had been raised whereon sat four hundred matrons, of the noblest, and fairest, and most richly-dressed in the city; and they continually ate the sweetmeats which were offered to them; and in the morning, and at noon, and at evening, it was as if they were a company come down from heaven. There were also bidden to the pageant several English noblemen, kinsmen to the king, who had come to Venice by sea, to exercise themselves in the art of navigation; and these gentles very freely shared our joy over the victory.

This racing lasted several days, and there was no prize but the honour, for in this first game there were no victors and no vanquished.

But for the second game prizes were made ready, for there were dangers to be faced, and the result could not be alike for all. There was a crown of gold adorned with precious stones for the first winner, and a richly-chiselled silver belt for the second. An edict had been sent forth, written in the military and vulgar tongue, under the Doge's seal, to invite the people of the neighbouring provinces to take part in this contest on horseback; and indeed there came a good number of contestants, not Italians only, but also strangers who spoke other languages, hoping to win the prize and to cover themselves [redacted] glory.

The jousting lasted four days, and since Venice was, there never was seen a fairer sight. On the last day the Doge, the nobles, and the strangers who had been present, and also he who ordered the combat, to whom, after God, was due all the joy of the tournament, gave the first prize to a gentleman of Venice, and the second to a stranger from Ferrara.

Here ends the feast, but not the rejoicing. Here ends also

this letter, by which I have endeavoured to show unto thine eyes and to make heard in thine ears that of which sickness has deprived them, that thou mayest know what is doing amongst us, and understand that even among navigators there are found excellent warriors, and souls of choice, and contempt of gold and thirst for honour.

Unhappily the triumph so vividly described by Petrarch was not final, and two years later, before Lorenzo Celsi had closed his eyes for ever, another revolt broke out in Candia. This time Venice took such radical measures that, in the words of one of the 'provveditori,' 'another rebellion was impossible, terrible examples had swept away the ringleaders, the fortresses which gave them asylums, the cities of Lasitha and Anapolis, every building which might afford a stronghold, were razed to the ground; those of the inhabitants who were not put to the sword were transported to other districts, the surrounding neighbourhood was converted into a desert, and thenceforward no one, on pain of death, was permitted to cultivate, or even to approach it.'

Smedley, Sketches of Ven. History, I. chap. vii.

This was in 1366, but Celsi had died at the fresh outbreak of the revolution, most opportunely, some historians say, for his reputation and honour. It was even thought that if he had lived a few years longer he would have ended like Marino Faliero. Grave accusations were made against him during the last months of his life, but the Council of Ten declared them to be false, and his successor was instructed to

Rom. iii. 202.

declare, when presiding the first time at the meeting of the Grand Council, that the memory of the deceased Doge was untarnished.

This successor was the aged Marco Corner, whose election was warmly contested. The accounts left us of what happened in the ducal palace during the interregnum which followed the death of Lorenzo Celsi enlighten us as to the objections which might be raised by the electors against a candidate to the throne. Marco Corner was too old; he was too poor; he was on good terms with several foreign princes, whom he had known when he had been abroad as ambassador; but the gravest charge, or objection, was that he had married a burgher's daughter, whose family would not know how to behave towards the head of the Republic.

Röm. iii. 229.

Marco Corner, who was present amongst the electors, at first said nothing to the other objections; but when slighting mention was made of his wife, the thin old man with snow-white hair stood up in his place suddenly, and cried out that he honoured and esteemed his aged wife, who was 'so good and virtuous that she had always been respected by all the women of the Venetian [redacted] as much as if she came of one of the greatest families.'

He added bluntly that as for his acquaintance with foreign princes, his friendships had profited the Republic more than himself; since, if he had sought his own advantage, he would not have deserved to be reproached with his poverty, nor would

Molmenti, Dogaressa, 154.

his wife be obliged 'to turn her dresses again and again, lest they should be seen to be worn out.'

The brave old patrician's heartfelt words made a deep impression on his hearers; the objections that had been raised fell away in an instant, and he was elected, I believe, unanimously. He took his place on the ducal throne, and his wife Caterina, the companion of his life-long poverty, left their poor little house for the splendours of the palace. The chronicles speak no more of her; we do not even know whether she died during her husband's three years' reign, or survived that quiet interval of tranquillity for the Republic.

Marco Corner died in the belief, no doubt, that his country would long enjoy the peace which his prudence and skill had brought about. Yet a day was at hand which came near to being fatal to the Republic. One might almost conclude that when Andrea Contarini had buried himself in the country on the mainland after having twice refused the ducal honours, and very shortly before Corner's death, he had prescience of the storm that was brewing.

The time had come when he could refuse no longer; for modest though he was, he knew his own strength, and knew also, as men of genius sometimes do, that he alone could save his country from destruction in the greatest crisis of her existence. The memorable war of Chioggia was at hand.



THE THREE BRIDGES

XIII

CARLO ZENO

At this period a man appears upon the scene who [redacted] to be taken as the highest type of a Venetian noble and of a dauntless soldier, in that remarkable age. He played such a part throughout his own time, the effect of his sudden appearance at the most critical moment in all Venetian history was so incalculably great, and the generalship he exhibited was of such a superior order, that it is worth while to give him a place apart in this

work. I shall condense the account of his earlier years as far as possible.

His history, written with great detail by his grandson Jacopo Zeno, Bishop of Feltre and Belluna, has *Muratori, Script. xix. 295.* been preserved by Muratori in the nineteenth volume of the *Scriptores*. Other histories confirm most of the facts therein related, and there is no reason to doubt the rest; yet taken altogether, as the life of a possible human being, the story must appear to most readers less probable than the wildest fictions of the elder Dumas or Victor Hugo, and there is certainly no tale in the English language, short of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, at once so fascinating and so incredible. Fortunately it is supported by the evidence of contemporaries, by the acts of the Venetian Government, and, lastly, as to the dangers he survived, by the testimony of those who prepared his body for burial when he died of extreme old age, and who found upon him the scars of five-and-thirty wounds, a great number of which would have been fatal to an ordinary man.

Carlo Zeno was the son of Pietro Zeno and of Agnese Dandolo, and therefore came of the best blood in Venice. Pietro had been for some time governor of Padua under the Carrara, and had subsequently won the favour of Pope Clement VI. by his zeal against the Turks when in command of a Venetian squadron in the East. The Emperor Charles IV. was also well disposed towards him, and Carlo was named after

that sovereign, who sent a representative to appear for him at the child's baptism.

Pietro died seven years later, leaving ten other children and a very exiguous fortune, for he had always sought glory rather than wealth, and his search had been rewarded.

It was decided to make a clerk of Carlo, and to send him at once to the court of the Pope at Avignon. His Venetian schoolmaster wrote out for him a Latin eulogium of his father and taught it to him, and when the small boy was brought before the pontiff and the cardinals he knelt down and recited this production without a fault. His august hearers were moved by his beauty, his spirit, his memory, and his bodily grace, and the performance seemed to them little short of miraculous for a child of seven years. The Pope received him into his household, the future man of war was dressed like a little priest, and before his education was half finished he was designated to be a canon of the cathedral of Patras with a rich benefice. After a time he was sent back to his uncle in Venice, and his relations decided that he should be sent to the University of Padua to make his studies.

Before he was thirteen he had his first taste of wounds and his first narrow escape. When returning to Venice from the country he was robbed by a shabbily dressed individual who imposed on him in order to be allowed to make the trip in his boat. The robber left him for dead, but he revived, and reached Mestre, where his hurts were dressed; and it was characteristic of the future

man that although a mere boy he succeeded in tracking his aggressor with blood-hounds and handed him over to the justice of Padua, where the man was executed.

After a considerable time he regained his strength, and returned to his studies at the University, but his taste for excitement and adventure led him into bad company; he gambled away his ready money, and even sold his books in order to play, until at last, being quite penniless and ashamed to go home, he disappeared from Padua, not yet a grown man, and joined one of those many fighting bands of mercenaries which were employed by the Italian princes of the time. During the following five years he was not heard of in Venice, his relatives gave him up for dead, and when he suddenly appeared at last he was greeted with no small delight by his brothers and sisters.

He stayed awhile with his family and then went to Greece, thinking that it was high time to take possession of his canonry of Patras. The governor received him with open arms, having no doubt heard that Zeno was fond of fighting, for the Turks were just then very troublesome; and the young man at once rendered good service, and would no doubt have done much more had he not been severely wounded—'mortally,' says the good bishop of Feltre. During the night he fell into a syncope which those who attended him took for death; they accordingly proceeded to prepare him for interment, and only waited for the morning in order to bury him; but he revived a little before daybreak, and escaped being buried alive. He was in such a

condition of weakness that he had to be taken to Venice to recover.

While he was there, Peter, King of Cyprus, came to the city, and soon took a strong fancy to Zeno, who seems to have made himself useful to this new patron in various ways; but soon the Emperor Charles IV., who was Carlo's godfather, appeared in Italy, and finding his godson to his liking carried him off and kept him with him for some time, employed him on business which gave him a chance of seeing France, Germany, and England, and at last allowed him to return to Patras and to his somewhat neglected ecclesiastical career.

But he was destined to be a soldier. Scarcely had he reached his destination when Patras was threatened by an army of ten or twelve thousand Cypriotes and Frenchmen, horse and foot; so, at least, says Carlo's grandson the bishop, in not very good Latin. The Bishop of Patras turned at once to Zeno, and placed under his command the small force of which he could dispose, being about seven hundred riders. With this handful of men, against odds of fifteen to one, Carlo kept the enemy at bay during no less than six months, [redacted] losing one man, and so harassed his adversaries that they abandoned the enterprise, made peace, and retired. Yet, as if whatever he did must lead always to more fighting, his success made him an object of envy to many, and especially to a certain Greek knight, named Simon, who had the audacity to accuse him of treachery. Thereupon Zeno challenged his calumniator

to single combat, and the day and place of meeting were named. The duel was to be fought in Naples, under the auspices of Queen Johanna, of evil fame. It was in vain that Carlo's friends besought him to forgive Simon, and his friend the bishop exhausted his eloquence in trying to reconcile the two. The hot-blooded young Venetian preferred to throw up his ecclesiastical benefice; and seeing himself thus free to marry, since he had not yet actually taken orders, he forthwith espoused a noble and rich lady of Clarentia, who was very much in love with him, and whose fortune at once supplied the place of the large income he had forfeited.

He was obliged to leave his bride almost immediately in order to meet his antagonist in Naples, and as the Neapolitan kingdom was distracted by wars he had some difficulty in reaching the city. To his surprise, and probably not much to his satisfaction, the Queen chose to treat the quarrel as something more like a question of law than a point of honour; a regular inquiry took place, Simon was declared to have been wholly in the wrong, and was ordered to pay all the expenses to which Zeno had been put on his account, and Queen Johanna forbade the duel.

His honour being now cleared beyond all possible calumny, he returned to Greece and was at once named governor of a province, though he was not yet twenty-three years of age, and his subsequent career might have been more peaceful than it turned out but for the sudden death of his wife. Her relations, or the Duke of Achaia, promptly cheated him of her dowry, and he

once more turned his face towards Venice, a good deal saddened and nearly penniless.



RIO DELLA GUERRA

And now, during the term of his mourning, he seriously thought of bettering his fortunes in some

permanent way, by following the example of so many of his countrymen and engaging in trade. As a first step, he made a good marriage with a daughter of the Giustiniani family ; soon afterwards he left his native city to establish himself in the East as a merchant, and he spent seven years away from home, partly in the 'city' of Tanais, which I take to be the modern Rostov, at the mouth of the Don, and partly in Constantinople.

Now at that time the rightful Emperor Calojohannes, who had been friendly to the Venetians, was kept a close prisoner by his son Andronicus, who had dethroned him, and favoured the Genoese. Calojohannes was shut up in a certain fortress which overhung the sea, and was guarded by a captain who was responsible for him. Andronicus probably did not know, however, that this captain's wife had in former times yielded to the seductions of Calojohannes, and was still devoted to him. It now occurred to the captive Emperor that she could safely convey letters between him and Zeno, whose father had received many favours at his hands in former years, and who would certainly be willing to help him now.

The 'little woman,' as the bishop calls her, succeeded in her dangerous errand, and it is needless to say that the mere suggestion of a perilous enterprise instantly fired Zeno's imagination. With incredible speed and with absolutely marvellous skill, he won over no less than eight hundred Greek soldiers who promised to obey him implicitly when called upon, and to be secret. The latter obligation was not hard to perform, as they

would certainly have lost their heads if they had not observed it.

All being ready for the bold stroke, it only remained to bring the Emperor safely out of prison before attempting a revolution, of the success of which the sanguine Zeno had not the slightest doubt. This was not exactly an easy matter, and Carlo undertook it himself. The Emperor's bedroom had one window high above the water, from which escape must have been considered impossible since it was not protected by any grating. Beneath this window Zeno came on a dark night by agreement with the captain's wife, and a rope was let down from the Emperor's chamber. The rest was child's play to the athletic young Venetian, and in a few moments he was in the presence of Calojohannes. But he had not counted upon the hesitating character and the soft heart of the man he wished to set free. With many tears the unhappy captive expressed his gratitude to Zeno for risking his life in such an adventure; but two of his sons were in the power of his third son, Andronicus, who would not hesitate to murder them on learning that the Emperor had escaped, and Calojohannes was not willing to sacrifice the children he loved for the sake of a few short years of life on the throne.

Carlo answered that there was no time for weeping and hesitating, and that Calojohannes should have considered these matters sooner; that if he would climb down the rope at once Zeno was ready to do all he had promised, and more also, but if not, Zeno would refuse

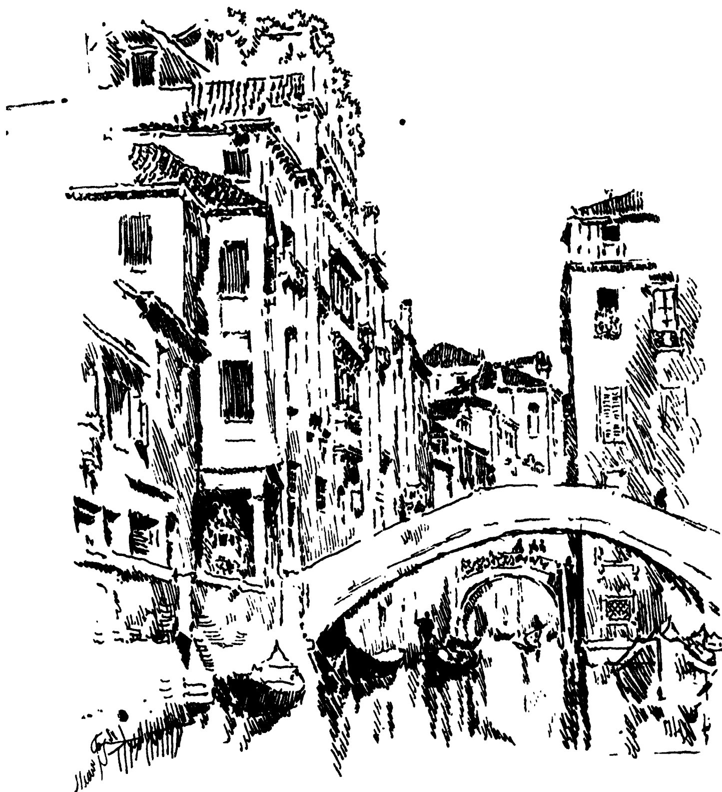
to have anything to do with the matter again. The Emperor continued to hesitate and to shed tears, and Zeno left him at once.

Nevertheless, no long time passed before the captain's wife was again the bearer of an entreating letter from the captive, who once more implored his friend's assistance; and by way of an inducement he added that he had made a will leaving the island of Tenedos to the Venetian Republic. The will itself accompanied the letter, to prove the writer's good faith. Zeno answered, accepting the proposal on behalf of his country, and the little woman hid the letter in her shoe. Unhappily for her and for the prisoner it dropped out just before she entered the Emperor's room, and was instantly picked up by a sentinel and sent to Andronicus. The poor messenger was seized, tortured, and made to confess the whole plot, including of course the part played by Zeno.

His life was now in imminent danger; he could neither remain in Constantinople nor leave without great risk of being taken and executed for high treason. Venice at that time sent a Bailo, or military ambassador to the capital of the East, who had jurisdiction over all Venetians residing there; in due course, and with the proper formalities, Andronicus applied to this high official to have Zeno arrested as having conspired against the throne, and the ambassador's position would manifestly have been extremely delicate if Zeno had not opportunely made his escape by the aid of a soldier who was grateful to him, and who helped him to get on board one of the Venetian men-of-war which

periodically visited the city in order to protect the interests of the Republic.

Zeno now showed the Emperor's will to the officer



RIO PERTRIN

in command, and the latter considered that, in view of a possible attempt on the part of the Genoese, it would be justifiable to try to seize Tenedos. On reaching

the island it was found to be in the keeping of a Greek officer, who still held it in the name of the dethroned Emperor. The fortress was ascertained to be fully provisioned and provided with an abundance of arms, and by no means to be taken by assault. But Carlo obtained an interview with the governor, and soon persuaded him that his best course, in the interests of Calojohannes, would be to place the island under the protection of Venice. Thereupon the squadron left a strong garrison in the town and returned to Venice with Zeno.

The Senate did not altogether approve the high-handed annexation; nevertheless, fearing lest the Genoese should help Andronicus to recover the island, they determined to send a fleet of fifteen ships to guard it, under Pietro Mocenigo, and not long afterwards two more vessels were sent to join the squadron, the one commanded by Zeno himself and the other by Michel Steno, who was afterwards Doge. Thereupon the Genoese immediately sent a large fleet to the East, Venice sent more reinforcements, and a conflict became imminent. Vittor Pisani now took charge of the whole Venetian force, with orders to make a naval demonstration before Constantinople; but though Zeno actually landed with some of his men by means of ladders, nothing worth mentioning was accomplished beyond the recovery of a Venetian man-of-war which the Greeks had seized on hearing of the occupation of Tenedos. Thither the fleet now returned, and three galleys were left under Zeno to protect the island.

Before long the Genoese, having heard of the departure of the main body of the Venetian fleet, sent twenty-two galleys to capture the object of contention. Zeno had only three hundred regular soldiers and a fair body of archers, and the Genoese proceeded to land their troops in great numbers, which was an easy matter, as the sea was absolutely calm and motionless although the month was November. Zeno occupied the suburbs of the town, and the castle was in charge of Antonio Venier.

The fight that followed was perhaps the first of those heroic deeds of arms which shed undying lustre on Carlo Zeno's name. The enemy had scarcely expected that the little force he had would oppose them; but instead, they encountered the most determined resistance as soon as they approached the outlying buildings of the town; they fought some time, were repulsed, and retired to their ships at dusk.

On the following morning they proceeded to land engines of war with the evident intention of laying regular siege to the town, and their movements soon showed that they meant to attack it on the side farthest from the castle. Zeno hastened to dispose a detachment of his men in ambush in a number of half-ruined and empty houses that stood in that quarter. With his remaining force he retired farther in, waited until the enemy were close to him, and then charged them furiously. They were but half prepared, and at the same instant the soldiers he had placed in hiding attacked them suddenly in the rear, and a large force found

itself completely surrounded by a small one of which it naturally exaggerated the numbers.

The Genoese were at first slaughtered like sheep, for while the Venetian regular soldiers hewed down the outer ranks, the bowmen shot their arrows into the central press with deadly effect; but rallying, I suppose, they broke through the thin line of their assailants, and again retired to their ships.

Zeno was badly wounded in the calf of the leg by an infected arrow, no uncommon thing in those days, when arrows were drawn from the bodies of the dead after battle and were used again and again. A 'poisoned arrow' in the warfare of the Middle Ages by no means implied that the enemy had dipped the barb in venom. As usual, Zeno paid no attention to such a trifle as a wound, and when the enemy returned on the morrow they were greeted by terrific discharges of artillery from the cannon which he had moved into place during their absence, and they were driven off with such slaughter that they gave up the enterprise, and sailed away on the next day. But in this last affair Zeno had been twice wounded again, in the hand and knee, and was so exhausted that he fell into spasms followed by syncope, like a man dying. His grandson tells us, obscurely enough, that he must have died indeed but for the assistance of a Gallo-Greek surgeon, whose novel mode of treatment consisted in burning the sound knee in order to draw health into the injured one. It is slightly more probable that Zeno's iron constitution had something to do with the cure. The weather

became cold, and winter set in soon afterwards, and he returned to Venice covered with glory.

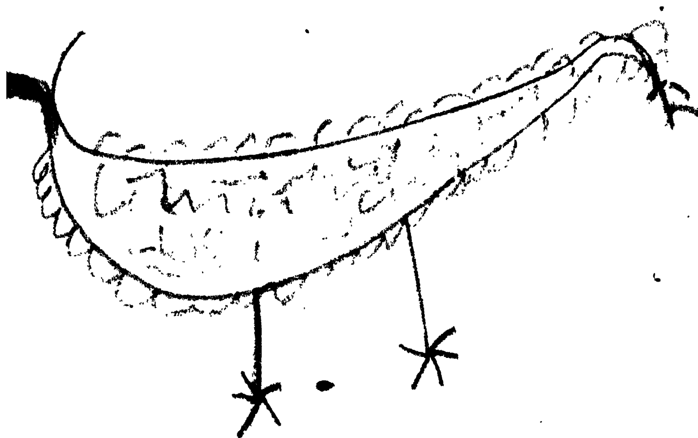
He deserved the praise that was freely given to him, for he had beaten a fleet and an army by sheer genius and courage with a handful of men and three ships, and had preserved to Venice the valuable island which guards the entrance to the Dardanelles. The hatred and rivalry between the two republics were of too long standing to be much embittered by his victory; but his success certainly helped in some degree to precipitate the final struggle.

I have sometimes thought that the behaviour of Venice to her most distinguished generals and statesmen may be compared with that of sea-captains who have a brave but unruly crew to deal with, and who alternately 'keep the men busy,' and clap the roughest hands in irons in order to impose respect upon the rest; and at times, it may be said without levity, that the conduct of the Government was like that of an unpopular and cowardly schoolmaster, who is a little nervous about his personal safety, and loses his nerve in matters of reward and punishment.

On the whole, Venice would have preferred that her battles should be won for her by paid condottieri; but when one of her own sons insisted on being a hero, something had to be done at once lest he should get into mischief. If there was no reasonable ground for imprisoning him, as Vittor Pisani was imprisoned, and as Carlo Zeno was himself imprisoned at a later date, he must be 'kept busy.' On this occasion Carlo had

hardly reached Venice when he was appointed to the important post of military governor in Negroponte, being at that time little more than thirty years of age.

The time which intervened between the date of this appointment and the siege of Chioggia was spent by him chiefly in fighting the Genoese at sea, with almost unvarying success, and some of his exploits will be referred to hereafter in their proper places. It would be impossible to narrate them all in any space less than a volume, and I have here told enough, it is to be hoped, to give the reader an idea of what his youth had been before the fortunes of war offered larger opportunities to his genius and patriotism.





BRIDGE AT CHIOGGIA

XIV

THE WAR OF CHIOGGIA

THE long rivalry of Venice and Genoa has been sufficiently explained and frequently alluded to in the previous pages. To give a connected account of the almost constant warfare waged between the two republics in Eastern and Mediterranean waters, from the Sea of Azov to Cape Corso, is beyond the scope and limits of the present work; for in order to understand the nature of the last tremendous struggle that took place at Chioggia, almost within sight of Venice, it is only necessary to recapitulate briefly those events

which, during the latter half of the fourteenth century, led directly to the crisis—a crisis after which the vanquished aggressor retreated, definitely beaten and for ever humiliated.

At the outset I shall inform my readers that I have preferred the account given by Romanin to that of the more romantic Daru; for the latter evidently followed the older historian Sabellico, even into the regions of the fabulous, whereas Romanin writes largely upon the authority of Caroldo and of Stella, the latter a Genoese whose account of his countrymen's disaster is above suspicion.

In the year 1345, a powerful Tartar chief named Zani Beg barbarously murdered certain Venetian and Genoese merchants established in the Crimea. For a short time this outrage united the two republics in a common desire for revenge, and they signed a treaty by which they mutually agreed to suspend all commercial relations with the Crimea—to 'boycott' the peninsula, as we should say. This was perhaps their only possible means of punishing Zani Beg for his wanton cruelty, since it is idle to suppose that two maritime nations could or would have carried war against a barbarian horde into the interior of such a country as the Crimea.

1345. Rom. iii. 152.

But the agreement had not been made with any sincere purpose, and before long the merchants of the two countries secretly resumed the trade, each trying to outwit the other. The result could not be doubtful; in 1350 the Genoese seized several Venetian ships with

rich cargoes on the coast of Syria, and war broke out between the republics.

The first two engagements, off Negroponte and on the Bosphorus, were disastrous to the Venetians, but the third, which took place off Lojera on the coast of Sardinia, resulted in an important victory for them; and the honour of the standard of Saint Mark would have been redeemed if Niccolò Pisani, the Venetian admiral, had not caused nearly five thousand prisoners of war to be drowned, a barbarity which accords ill with the man's real courage, and would be incredible if it were not proved beyond the possibility of contradiction.

Rom. iii. 169.

It was after this defeat that the Genoese Republic placed itself in the hands of Giovanni Visconti, Archbishop of Milan, the strongest of the Lombard princes. This extraordinary act was prompted solely by the desire of immediate revenge upon the Venetians, and Visconti was not slow to lend the required means for continuing the war, though he was cautious with regard to actual hostilities, and attempted a reconciliation by sending Petrarch as ambassador to Venice. The negotiations failed, however, and each republic sent out a new fleet; with extraordinary daring, Doria, the Genoese admiral, sailed up the Adriatic and ravaged Istria and Parenzo, threatening Venice itself, but retiring after inspiring something very like a panic. It was at this moment that the Doge Andrea Dandolo died, and that Marino Faliero was elected to succeed him.

On his side, Pisani, the Venetian commander, attempted no such undertaking. Deceived, doubtless, by Doria's clever manœuvres, he sought him in the Archipelago, and thither Doria sailed, after his exploits in the Adriatic. The hostile fleets met off Modon, opposite Sapienza, and the engagement resulted in the

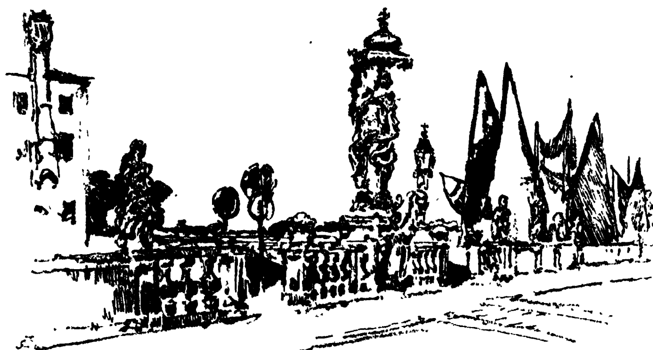


STREET IN CHIOGGIA

total defeat of the Venetians. Niccolò Pisani himself, six thousand other prisoners, and thirty galleys of war were carried off by Doria to Genoa; and it has been justly said that had he placed his prisoners in safety, manned his prizes, and sailed with them to Venice, the city must have fallen an easy prey to his attack.

By this disaster Venice was reduced to great straits, and while private citizens equipped men-of-war at their own cost, to help the country, the Republic appealed to Giovanni Visconti and obtained a four months' truce.

The battle of Modon, or Sapienza, was fought on the third of November 1354; the truce was obtained soon afterwards, and on the sixteenth of April 1355 Marino Faliero was beheaded for treason.



THE SHRINE AT CHIOGGIA

More than twenty years had elapsed, and another and younger Pisani had reached maturity and eminence before the two republics again resumed the contest for the mastery of the sea. It would not, I think, be possible to accuse either of having been at any time more aggressive than the other had been, or was, without unfairness. There was an element of fate in the struggle; it was the inevitable contest for final superiority which takes place whenever two individuals,

or two bodies of men, or two nations, are pitted against each other in the same pursuit under the same circumstances. The disastrous wars with Lewis of Hungary for the possession of Dalmatia, in which Venice became involved after the death of Faliero, the repeated revolts in Candia, and above all, the ravages of the plague, reduced the population and the wealth of Venice until, at last, she seemed an easy prey. Most assuredly the neutral powers that calmly watched the approach of the war which broke out in 1378 did not believe that Venice could come out of the trial still keeping her independence.

On the morning of the twenty-second of April in that year, a vast multitude thronged the square and the basilica of Saint Mark's. Vittor Pisani was to receive his commission as commander-in-chief of the fleet at the steps of the high altar, to hear the solemn high mass, and then, kneeling before Andrea Contarini, he was to take from the Doge's hands the great standard of the Republic.

1378.

The chief of the Republic spoke to him briefly in tones that rang through the hushed cathedral. 'You are chosen by God,' he said, 'to defend the honour and the possessions of your country, and avenge the offences of those who would destroy the freedom which our fathers gave us. Into your hand we commend the flag that has ever been the terror of our enemies; see that you bring it back victorious and unstained.'

Vittor Pisani sailed out of the harbour with only

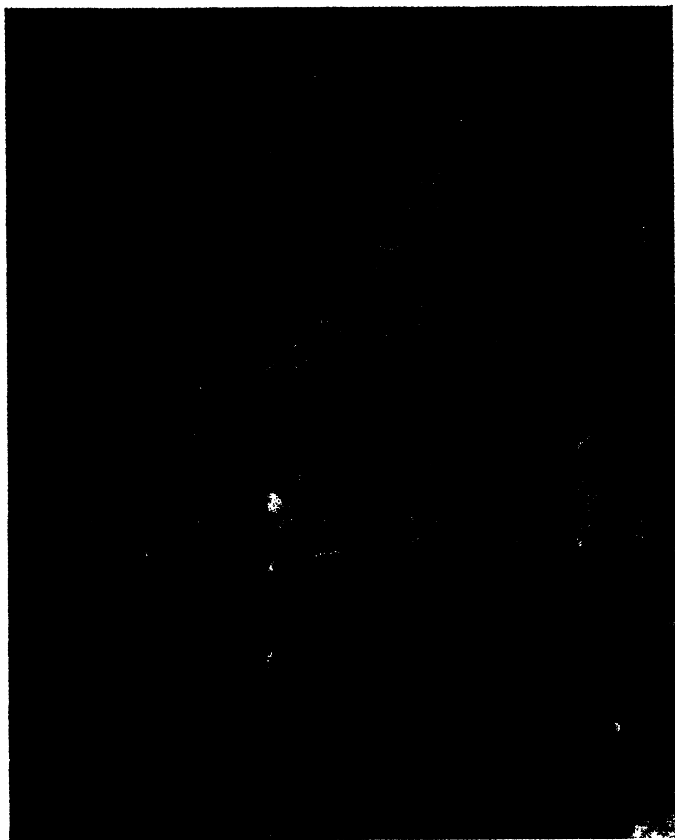
fourteen vessels, intending to thwart any attempt on the part of Fieschi, the Genoese admiral, to enter the Adriatic. But the Genoese were still far away, delayed by contrary winds, and Pisani sailed round Italy to the Roman shore before he sighted the enemy's fleet. The battle that followed was fought within sight of Anzio on the thirtieth of May 1378.

Rom. iii. 263.

In a heavy south-westerly gale, which, as often happens in the Mediterranean, was accompanied by terrific thunderstorms, the Venetians bore down upon their opponents. They evidently had the advantage of being before the wind, while the Genoese must have been obliged to heave to in order to hold their own, a matter of no small difficulty for a war vessel of the fourteenth century. Yet in spite of their superior position at the time of the attack, four out of the fourteen Venetian galleys were so hopelessly separated from the rest as to be unable to join in the fight. Any seaman will at once understand that they must have run past the Genoese to the northward, and that they were then unable to beat back to the scene of action before night. On the other hand, one of the Genoese ships got aground on the dangerous lee shore and went to pieces.

The result of long and fierce fighting was a complete victory for the Venetians. They captured five of the enemy's galleys and took Fieschi himself prisoner. He must have had gloomy forebodings when he was taken, remembering how Pisani's terrible namesake had drowned five thousand prisoners of war

after the battle of Lojera, or Cagliari. And the Venetian admiral doubtless remembered and hoped to



THE SALUTE, NIGHT

atone for that barbarous deed, for he treated his captives with every kindness; and even after they had

reached Venice they were not confined in the prisons, but were merely shut up and guarded in vast warehouses, where they had plenty of air and were abundantly provided with necessaries. A committee of noblemen was deputed to take care of them, and to see that they lacked nothing. The ladies of Venice also organised themselves in a sort of sisterhood, for the purpose of ministering to the not over-great sufferings of the vanquished, and the noblest names of the Republic stand on the list of those charitable women. Anna Falier, Francesca Bragadin, Margherita Michiel, Marchesina Bembò, and several others, are especially mentioned by the historians as 'angels of goodness and devotion.' All Venice sought to be forgiven by Europe for the horrors of Lojera.

Pisani had been far too prudent to push on to Genoa with a fleet which only counted nineteen sail, including his five prizes, and he deemed it wiser to return to the Adriatic and to harass the Genoese on the coast of Greece and Dalmatia, whence, under the protection of the King of Hungary, they constantly made piratical excursions against the Venetian merchantmen.

After taking possession of several strong places, Pisani asked permission to return to Venice in order to rest his men and refit while waiting for the spring, but the Senate ordered him to continue cruising off Istria in case the Genoese should unexpectedly enter the Adriatic. There is no doubt but that this measure was prudent in itself, but, on the other hand,

Storming of Cattaro, A. Vicentino; Sala dello Scrutinio. Rom. iii. 265.

Pisani's fleet was altogether in too bad a state to keep at sea through the winter, and in a more or less hostile neighbourhood. A sickness of some kind, not explained by the chroniclers, decimated the crews of his galleys, and he seems to have lacked suitable and sufficient provisions, as well as stores for repairing his rigging and sails. He obeyed the Senate's orders, however, and he made his headquarters at Pola.

In February he was informed that he was confirmed in his charge of admiral of the fleet, but at the same time the Senate appointed him two advisers, or counsellors, following the true Venetian method of watching, and often hampering, the commander in the prosecution of the war. These 'provveditori,' as they were called, were the famous Carlo Zeno and a certain Michel Steno—whether the one who had precipitated the conspiracy of Marino Faliero twenty-four years earlier or not does not appear certain. At all events, he reached his post and remained with Pisani, but Zeno did not.

Later in the spring Pisani received a reinforcement of eleven galleys, sent him in order that he might be able to protect the Venetian vessels that regularly plied between Venice and Apulia to supply the Republic with corn.

While he was convoying a number of these vessels, a storm forced two of his galleys to take shelter in Ancona, where they were seized by the Genoese; but a few days later Pisani encountered the latter, beat them in a short engagement, and recaptured his ships. Scarcely had he got to anchor in the harbour of Pola,

however, when twenty-five Genoese men-of-war hove in sight, under the command of Luciano Doria. Pisani could not reasonably hope to fight such a fleet with any chance of victory, and would have preferred to await the arrival of his reinforcements under Carlo Zeno, who was expected in a few days; but his officers clamoured for battle, and Michel Steno, the provveditor, even went so far as to hint that Pisani was a coward to stay in port. This was more than the admiral could bear, though he was the mildest and most long-suffering of brave men; and in the shortest possible time he got his fleet under way, calling upon all who loved Saint Mark to follow him.

I know not whether the wind gave him any advantage at first, as at Anzio, or whether the brilliant little victory he won was due to the fury of his attack. Be that as it may, he slew, or helped to slay, Luciano Doria with his own hands, and put the imposing Genoese fleet to flight.

But the enemy, in the absence of pursuit, soon rallied, and in a few hours inflicted upon Pisani a most disastrous defeat. He himself barely escaped with six galleys out of the nineteen or twenty that had composed his force. Poor in ships, as Venice was at that time, this was a blow that threatened her existence; for the Genoese now had nearly forty vessels, including the prizes recently taken, some of which were perhaps the very galleys they had lost to Pisani at Anzio.

How far Pisani's misfortune was the result of the unwise advice he was obliged to submit to from Michel

Steno, it is not easy to say; but he was certainly badly handicapped by the non-arrival of his other appointed counsellor, Carlo Zeno, with the promised reinforcements. The Senate took neither the one question nor the other into consideration, any more than it showed the slightest grateful recollection of his many former services to the Republic. He was hastily tried, convicted of having failed to do his duty, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, with the loss, during five years, of all emoluments he received from the State and of all public office for the same period. Venice always acted on the principle that no amount of success could condone one failure, and that defeat was next door to treason. Michel Steno fared somewhat better, for he was not actually imprisoned, but he and all the officers of the fleet were suspended from all public functions for a year.

Rom. iii. 268.

These drastic measures did not improve the position of the Republic in that time of immediate danger. It was easy to consign Vittor Pisani to the pozzi, but it was quite another matter to replace him, especially in the absence of Carlo Zeno, the only other man of the same calibre upon whom Venice could count.

Pietro Doria had taken the place of Luciano, whom Pisani had killed in battle, and he worked his way steadily up the eastern coast, retaking one by one all the fortified places which Pisani had recently seized, until at last his fleet appeared off the Lido, literally within sight of Venice.

The consternation was indescribable, and it is more

than likely that if Pietro Doria had boldly forced the entrance to the lagoons, the city would have fallen an easy prey. Indeed, the situation of the Republic seemed even then almost desperate, for while she was beaten at sea and assailed by the Genoese fleet, the Carrara had leagued themselves against her with the King of Hungary, and threatened her land boundaries on the north and west.

But it always happens in the history of nations, as it generally does in the private lives of individual men, that the last extremity of danger calls forth the true character of peoples, as of persons. It is then that the hero is a hero; it is then that the coward performs miracles of speed in flight.

Venice called out every man able to bear arms. A patrician, Leonardo Dandolo, was entrusted with the defence of the Lido; two others were charged with the protection of the basilica of Saint Mark's and the adjoining square; another was made responsible for the quarter of the Rialto; and others again were told off to defend the outlying islands, Torcello, Murano, and Mazzorbo. Finally, Jacopo Cavalli, a foreign captain, was promised a very large recompense if he could perform the almost impossible feat of defending the Venetian territory on the mainland with four thousand horse, two thousand footmen, and a not inconsiderable number of bowmen.

The monastery of Saint Nicolas on the Lido was converted into a regular fortress. Three huge hulks, which I conjecture to have been old transports from

the days of the crusades, were lashed together with triple chains, and sunk at the entrance to the lagoons. As far as possible all the male inhabitants of the city were armed, and were so organised as to be ready to fight whenever the great bell of Saint Mark's should give the signal.

Rom. iii. 268.

Meanwhile ambassadors were sent one after the other, and in haste, to the court of Hungary in the hope of detaching the King from his alliance with the lords of Padua, but they utterly failed to bring about the desired result; for both the Carrara and the Genoese spread abroad in Buda the report, by no means exaggerated, that Venice was at the last extremity, and must soon yield to her allied enemies; and the King, trusting to this welcome news, answered the Venetian ambassadors with such arrogance that they had no choice but to take their leave.

The Genoese fleet lay at anchor off the Lido, and the only chance of safety seemed to lie in attacking it boldly, for as yet it consisted of no very large number of vessels. Six good Venetian ships of war, manned by picked men, would no doubt suffice, and these could still be produced. They were placed under the command of Taddeo Giustiniani, and they sailed out through the narrow channel that had been left navigable.

Rom. iii. 273.

Now it chanced that on board of one of the Genoese galleys there was a certain man, a Venetian sailor, who had been taken prisoner with the galley commanded by Giovanni Soranzo when Vittor Pisani was defeated;

and he was brave and loved his country, but his name has not come down to us. When he saw the Venetian ships making ready, inside the Lido, he managed to drop himself overboard, and he swam for his life towards the entrance; and as Giustiniani sailed out he



CALLE CASALLI

saw this man ahead swimming, and making desperate signals to the Venetians to bring to.

The commander recognised him as a Venetian either by his appearance or by his language, laid his topsail to the mast and took him aboard, to learn that the

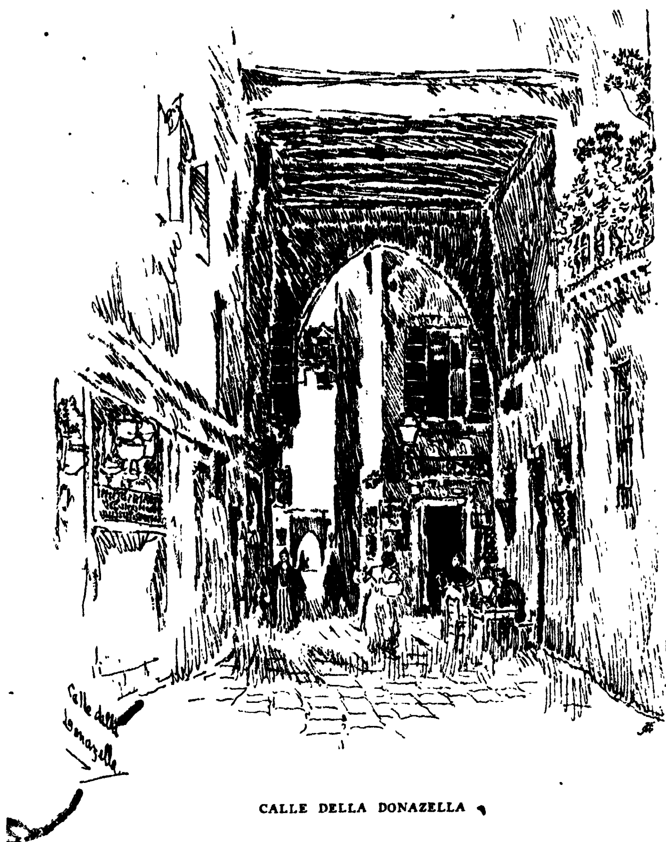
Genoese vessels before him were but the vanguard of a huge fleet which was itself at hand, and would soon be in sight. To engage was now out of the question, and could only end in the total loss of the six Venetian vessels; Giustiniani put about and re-entered the lagoons, to take the bad news to Venice.

The first fault committed by the Genoese was that, having surprised the city, they did not profit by their advantage and storm it at once, at a moment when at least half the population must have been paralysed with fear. Instead, they seem to have followed a consistent but mistaken plan; for they pillaged and laid waste the outlying islands one by one with the evident intention of destroying the city's supplies, and of ultimately cutting off all communication between it and the mainland.

In the course of this more or less systematic operation they came before Malamocco on the sixth of August 1379; but here they met with a first check, for they perceived that the place was too strongly fortified to be rashly attacked, and they therefore sailed past it towards Chioggia, which was, and is, the most important strategic point of the lagoons.

Chioggia is close to the mainland, at the western extremity of the Venetian archipelago. The name belongs vaguely, in old maps, to the long island properly called Brondolo, on the western end of which is built the town of Brondolo; more particularly to the port, or entrance between this island and the one called Pelestrina, between which two the 'Lupa,' the Tower of the She-Wolf, rises out of the water; and

especially to the small city of Chioggia. [illegible] is divided into two parts—the greater Chioggia, [illegible]



CALLE DELLA DONAZELLA

a number of very small islets, and the lesser, which stands on the inside shore of the main island. There was a bridge between the two parts.

The entrance to the port of Chioggia being deep and safe, the Venetians had deepened also a natural channel, twenty-five miles long, which led thence through the shallow lagoons to Venice, and this was one of the best and safest approaches to the city from the outer sea, a fact which was well known to the Genoese, who looked upon Chioggia as the real key to the capital, and the name of the place has been given by all historians to the war that followed. It is almost needless to say that the extreme shallowness of the lagoons was a real defence against an enemy not well acquainted with the channels, which, as every one knows, are marked by tall timbers that project from six to fifteen feet above the water. To remove these was a first measure of defence.

The most tremendous exertions were made by the Venetians to prepare themselves for an attack, which would almost certainly have been fatal to them if the Genoese had not put it off too long. Reinforcements were at once sent down to Pietro Emo, the Podestà of Chioggia, who anchored a large armed hulk in the channel, manning it with soldiers and supplying it with provisions to last some time.

Rom. iii. 4.

The lesser Chioggia, on the shore of the island, was abandoned as not defensible, but the main town was very effectually fortified, and each little islet became a separate stronghold. On the side of the allies Carrara succeeded with great difficulty in conveying a considerable force of men from Padua down the old branch of the Brenta, which the Venetians had obstructed by

sinking a hulk across it. Carrara is said to have dug a channel round this point in a single night. The allies had now about twenty-four thousand fighting men.

Pisani had been beaten at Pola in May; it was on the sixth of August that the Genoese reconnoitred Malamocco and anchored off Chioggia harbour, and their attack upon Chioggia itself began on the eleventh. On that day the armed hulk which Emo had moored in the channel was captured and burned, and the Genoese fleet was able to enter the port and lie before the besieged town, while Carrara and the Paduans assailed it from the side of the lagoons in their light boats. Every day the united forces renewed their attack, and hour by hour they won their way into the strong little place, taking the bridges and fortifications one after another. By the fifteenth of the month, the bridge to Brondolo having been taken, it was clear to the Venetians that Chioggia was lost, and Dandolo considered how he might withdraw his force to Venice. It seemed only too certain that every man who could be saved alive would be needed for the defence of the capital, and it was still possible to escape across the shallows, where the Genoese could not follow in their ships and the Paduans did not know their way. The carnage had already been frightful. It is said that six thousand Venetians were slain, and that three thousand and five hundred were taken prisoners. Dandolo saved a large number in his retreat; but the heroic Pietro Emo refused to leave the town, and remained with fifty devoted

Rom. iii. 275.

men to fight to the very death within his own palace walls. The town was sacked forthwith, and much of it was burned; over what was left the standards of Genoa, of Carrara, and of Hungary were displayed where the banners of Saint Mark had floated for centuries, until that bloody day.

Chioggia fell as the sun went down, and the news reached Venice late that night. The city was all awake and in desperate anxiety, and when the truth was known fear turned almost to panic. Women rushed frantically to the churches to confess and receive the sacraments, as if the Last Judgment of God were upon them. The men were at first silent, paralysed in absolute consternation; since Chioggia was gone, the Genoese might be upon Venice by morning.

But again they let the opportunity pass, and the Venetians were vouchsafed a breathing space, which might seem but enough to show them how desperate their situation really was. For Treviso was already besieged by Carrara's troops when Chioggia fell, and the allies were closing in upon the city like a wall of iron.

The Doge Contarini displayed a coolness and a courage altogether heroic. The Republic had oppressed its chief by an intolerable system of spying and petty limitations that reduced his personality to a nonentity in ordinary times. It had forbidden him almost everything; but it had not forbidden him to die for his country. The example of one man could still revive the courage and sustain the calm of thousands.

Venice was not lost so long as that one true citizen remained alive.



CAMPO S. BENEDETTO

The Doge and the senators gave all their own treasure to the public fund, and imposed regular taxes on the citizens; they distributed the supplies of arms

with great good judgment, and sent out scouts upon the lagoons in the lightest and swiftest skiffs, in order that no movement of the enemy should escape observation.

But the people murmured against the Government, even in their constant terror; for Vittor Pisani was their idol, and he was still in prison.

It may have been the intention of the Genoese and their allies to starve Venice to a surrender; but I think it more likely that Doria's procrastination was in accordance with his own character, and that it was in part due to the almost inevitable complications which arise where military command is not vested in one person, but is shared almost equally by a number of allied captains.

The very first and most pressing danger was past when Contarini called a General Assembly of the people, on the thirteenth of September, by causing the great bell of Saint Mark's to be rung. It was long since the summons had been heard, and the population answered it eagerly. The cathedral was soon thronged to suffocation by men of all ages and conditions, who listened in profound silence to the eloquent words of the senator Pietro Mocenigo. He spoke from a high balcony or pulpit, and his ringing voice was heard in the farthest corners of the great building.

He told his hearers that the time had come when they must think of the honour of their women, the lives of their young children, and the safety of their worldly goods; he said that whosoever lacked necessary food for himself and his family need only ask for what

he needed at any patrician house—he should be treated as a friend, as a brother, the last crust of bread should be shared with him. That was all, save that he called upon all sensible men to speak, if they had any advice to give which would be for the public good and safety.

The impression made by this simple speech was profound, for the people owed the aristocracy no long-standing grudge as in other Italian cities. The nobles had neither ground them down, nor tormented them, nor dishonoured them, but had only taken the political power and, with it, the responsibilities of government. In the wars of Venice the nobles had shed their blood for their country much more abundantly, in proportion to their numbers, than the people themselves; and in peace, their suspicions, their spyings, and their eternal repression had been directed against each other, and never against the poor man. And now they reaped their reward; they stooped to call the poor man brother, and the mere words flattered him, and cheered him, and made a hero of him. Happy Venice, even in that dire extremity!

Then many rose up in the church and cried out that every ship in the arsenal that would float must be manned to attack the enemy rather than yield to starvation.

Mocenigo, the orator, being satisfied with this answer of the people, went on to the question of choosing a leader, and proposed Taddeo Giustiniani; but the multitude would none of him, and shouted for Vittor

Pisani. Under him they would win or die, they cried as one man, and they would have no other.

To resist such a demand would have been madness, and for once the lordly Signory bowed before the plebeian will. The captain was forthwith led out of prison, and the crowd, frantic with joy at his release, carried him in triumph on their shoulders round the square of Saint Mark's.

'Long live Vittor Pisani!' they shouted.

'No,' he cried, answering them in commanding tones. 'Long live Saint Mark!'

Some obeyed him, and some would not, and the two cries mingled together. 'Pisani, Saint Mark, Saint Mark, Vittor Pisani.'

The historian Daru, whose passion for romance sometimes led him far, says that Pisani asked to be allowed to spend one more night in confinement, in order that he might prepare himself by prayer for performing his devotions the next morning, and that it was from the window of his prison that he rebuked the crowd for cheering him. Yet Daru himself, a few pages earlier, had just described the prisons of Venice in the fourteenth century as horrible dens which had neither light nor air except from a narrow corridor, adding that the most piercing screams could never be heard outside.

Daru, ii. 217.

Men like Pisani have little need of acting or posing in order to increase their prestige, for it is enough that they should show themselves and brave men will follow them. The captain was taken from prison at once and,

after saying a prayer in the basilica, went before the Doge.

The mutual position of the two men was a strange one. Contarini must have been well aware that Pisani's condemnation had been utterly unjust; Pisani had suffered that condemnation without complaint, and well knew that the Doge had voted for it; both were brave and patriotic men, who believed devoutly in the system by which their own aristocracy repressed among its members any attempt at individualism, spied upon itself, and treated failure as a crime. Pisani, if the situation had been reversed, would have condemned Contarini as unhesitatingly as Contarini had condemned him. It was certainly against the theory of the Republic that he should be taken out of prison before he had expiated his defeat; but it was inevitable, and he was free.

Yet both men found something to say in these almost absurd circumstances, which was neither commonplace, nor undignified, nor merely complimentary.

'Your prudent and wise conduct,' said the Doge, 'will efface your misfortunes, and avenge not only any offence which you may have received yourself'—Pisani had been called a coward by the provveditor of the Republic—'but also the injuries which our country has suffered at the hands of our enemies; you will therefore consider rather the favour done you now than the past disgrace in which you have been, and you will gladly seize this occasion of proving how unfounded those accusations were which

Rom. iii. 278.

were made against you, and how much you desire to earn in future the gratitude of our country.'

To this cleverly-worded and not wholly inane speech Pisani replied that he had altogether forgotten the past, and that he should find means, by the grace of God, to deserve the confidence placed in him.

Before he was allowed to depart he was informed that he was not to have sole command of the Venetian troops, since Taddeo Giustiniani had been entrusted with the defence on the side towards the Lido. Pisani bent his head and answered that he had at all times obeyed the orders of the Signory.

But the people were less submissive to this school-master justice; they would have Pisani, and no one but Pisani. Even the soldiers who came from the little island of Torcello protested. 'Command us what you will,' they said to him, 'we will do whatever you order us, but it must be under your own eyes.'

Rom. iii. 279.

So a deputation of the younger ones among them went to the ducal palace, carrying the banner of Torcello before them, and addressed the counsellors. 'For the love of God,' they said, 'give us three galleys, which we will equip at our own cost, on condition that we be always, and everywhere, under the orders of Vittor Pisani.'

By way of answer they were ordered to go to the Lido and fight under Taddeo Giustiniani. 'We will be cut into small pieces rather than fight under him,' cried the men of Torcello, who were assembled in the

square when the deputation brought them the answer of the Signory.

The Venetians took up the cry, and again the Government was obliged to yield. To paralyse the people's enthusiasm at such a moment, to shake their confidence, to trample upon their wholesale sympathies, was to lose Venice herself. When it was known that Pisani was appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces, the enthusiasm of the city broke out in wild cheering for Saint Mark, for the Doge, for the Government; all the men hastened to enrol themselves under his standard, and all the women brought whatever they possessed of value to the palace, both jewels and other objects; they even ripped the silver trimmings and embroideries from their clothes. Forty galleys which lay in the arsenal were fitted out in three days, and in the same time two-thirds of the crews necessary had been found.

Rom. iii. 280.

The Government promised great rewards to all who should distinguish themselves in the struggle. It was announced that thirty citizen families, whichever should contribute the most directly to the salvation of the Republic, should be inscribed in the Golden Book of the nobles; that all strangers who would take arms to defend Venice should be adopted as children by the State, and should enjoy all the privileges accorded to the original burghers; finally, the Government promised to distribute five thousand ducats, or over thirty-seven hundred pounds sterling, to the poorer families of the city not belonging to the nobility. Having made these

promises, the State, by its decree, proceeded to threaten vengeance against all who should desert the posts assigned to them, or attempt to leave Venice so long as it was menaced by the enemy.

When all was ready for the bold attempt the Senate took final measures for the disposition of the troops, as well as for the police of the city. In those quarters which were most exposed to an attack, as, for instance, that of the Niccolotti, the inhabitants were to be continually ready to fight at a moment's notice; in the remaining quarters only one-third of the men were to remain at home as a garrison, while the rest placed themselves under the orders of Pisani at the front. A careful watch was kept upon all vagabonds, idlers, and other suspicious persons as long as the war lasted, lest any of them should enter into correspondence with the enemy's fleet.

When we consider the condition of the Republic at this moment, it must seem little short of amazing that Venice should have survived at all. The territory of the State was reduced by the invasion of the allies to little more than the city itself; every outpost except the tower of the salt-works was in the hands of the enemy; a large fleet with a very strong force of men was in safe possession of Chioggia, the key to the lagoons; and all attempts at negotiating with the enemy had signally failed. The Republic had, indeed, gone so far as to send a suppliant embassy to her former vassal, Francesco Carrara; he was addressed with humility as 'Powerful and magnificent lord,' and

a fair sheet of blank paper was laid before him on which he was requested to note with his own hand his own terms for peace, with the sole condition that Venice should still be considered independent; and the ambassadors had brought with them some Genoese prisoners whom



THE HORSES OVER THE GREAT DOOR, ST. MARK'S

they offered to return without ransom. But these humble proposals were haughtily refused, Carrara bade the suppliants to return and take their prisoners with them, threatening that he would ere long bridle the bronze horses of Saint Mark's and keep them quiet for ever.

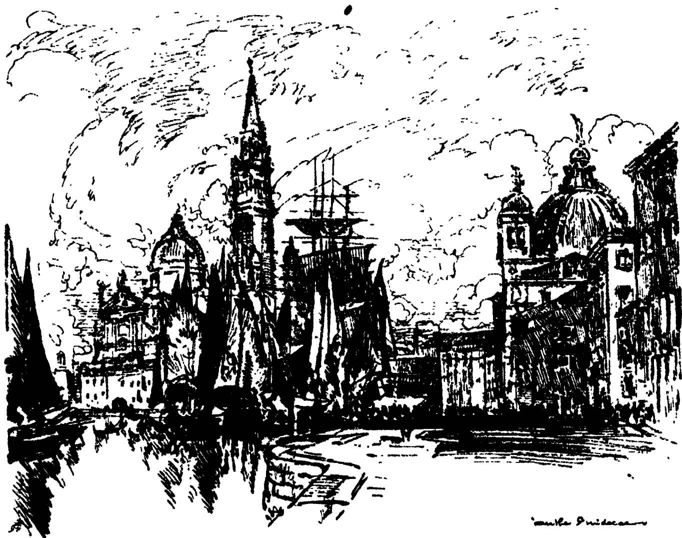
I have quoted this incident as it is given from

Chinazzo's chronicle in Smedley's *Sketches from Venetian History*, and there seems no reason to doubt the authority of the Italian historian, whose work is to be found in Muratori.

Pisani had lost no time, while the allies were wasting theirs in useless reconnoitring and futile skirmishes. He had fortified the entrance of the Lido with temporary towers built in the short space of four days, he had sunk hulks in all the important channels, and had got ready a great number of small boats with which to convey his men across the shallow water. Moreover, as many among his troops had no experience of the oar, he had trained them as well as might be, in the short time, on the canal now known as the Giudecca. But he had kept his own plan a secret, and it does not appear that when the Venetians made their bold attack upon the allies they knew what their leader purposed. It was enough that he led them; they followed him, to do or die.

Andrea Contarini, eighty years of age, but still as brave as any youth in the host, would not suffer the expedition to go forth without him, and his example not only roused the enthusiasm of every fighting man, but was followed by a number of senators too old to bear arms. In the last extremity of danger Venice had one vast advantage against overwhelming odds, for her people were united to a man. Men gave not only themselves but all their fortunes to save their country, and for the first and, I believe, the last time in history, a commercial people forgave one another their com-

mercial debts for the sake of the common safety. One individual burgher fitted out a galley at his own expense; another bound himself to support a thousand men throughout the war; all those who had anything to give gave it freely, and those who had nothing gave themselves.



ON THE GIUDECCA

The offensive movement of the Venetians had been preceded by several successful skirmishes in October and November, the result of which had been that the Genoese had more or less abandoned operations for the winter, and had withdrawn their fleet into the safe harbour of Chioggia to await the spring, leaving only

three galleys to cruise before the entrance in case a surprise should be attempted. They seem to have been as sure of taking Venice as if they had been anchored opposite the Piazzetta; and in accordance with the military practice of those days, they and their allies hibernated, apparently taking it for granted that the Venetians would do the same, and wait resignedly to be destroyed in warmer weather. They were rudely awakened from their secure dreams of victory and spoil.

The Venetian fleet stole out to sea on the evening of the twenty-first of December, consisting of thirty-four galleys, sixty smaller armed vessels, and hundreds of flat-bottomed boats. Pisani led the van, towing two heavy old hulks laden with stones. There is a disagreement of authorities as to the day of the month on which he left Venice, but all agree that the Venetians appeared off the Chioggia entrance and landed four thousand men on the point of Brondolo island at dawn on the following morning — no inconsiderable feat, though the night had been the longest of the year. The distance, on a modern Admiralty chart, from the port of Lido to the Chioggia entrance, outside the islands, I find to be about thirteen nautical miles; by the canals within the lagoons it is considerably farther, but it is certain that Pisani went by the open sea.

1379. Rom. iii. 285.

The Genoese were taken by surprise. The three cruisers on duty as sentinels outside the port were not where they should have been, and we hear no more of

them; it almost looks as if, in their security, the invaders must have given up that last precaution.

In the face of a heavy fire and with the loss of one vessel, burned by the enemy, Pisani succeeded in sinking his hulks across the entrance. To the last the Genoese do not appear to have understood his intention, for they themselves, or their own fire, helped to sink the heavily-ballasted vessels, and it was not until all was over, and the barrier had been made insurmountable by heaping other material upon it, that they plainly saw what had happened. They were caught like mice in a trap, unless they could get their fleet out by some other way. The mouth of the Brenta river at Brondolo, two miles to the southward, still remained navigable, and Pisani proceeded to blockade it in the same way, though with far greater difficulty. Federico Cornaro was entrusted with the dangerous and difficult task, and accomplished it under a terrific fire, Pisani protecting him meanwhile from any attack from the Genoese vessels.

This being done, the enemy's fleet was paralysed, and the result could only have been a matter of time, if Pisani had been in command of a regular force. Instead, his men were volunteers and raw recruits, capable of magnificent courage in a single engagement, as they had shown, and ready to shed their blood as they had given their treasure; but they were ill accustomed to exposure, to night work at sea in the depth of winter, to a hundred small daily sufferings to which a trained seaman is hardened and indifferent. Clearly,

Pisani could not leave the scene of action, even for a day, and even if he had consented to such an act of folly, there was the old Doge, swearing upon the hilt of his sword never to return to Venice till the enemy was thoroughly beaten. Yet the volunteers of the people cared little for such an example, and threatened to go home to Venice in a body, leaving the Genoese to dig their way out if they could, and indifferent to the fact that if left to themselves they could certainly find means of reaching Venice within a few days, though they could not bring their fleet. They had been in real danger now, and they would waste no more time in idleness or futile skirmishing.

It was in vain that Pisani tried to cheer such a force by reminding them that Carlo Zeno, with a strong fleet manned by veteran seamen, was expected to return. The people knew well enough that he had been expected for months, and that there was no reason why he should appear providentially at the present juncture. It was the Christmas season ; they had fought like lions, shut up their enemies, and momentarily averted extreme danger ; for amateur soldiers this seemed enough, and they clamoured to be allowed to go back to their wives and children.

Like Columbus, Pisani saw himself on the very verge of losing the result of all his labour, for lack of a little more trust on the part of his men. To keep them by force was impossible, for they themselves were the male population of Venice, and for the time being they held good and evil in their hands. Even the

senators and other nobles murmured at being obliged



RIO S. POLO

to keep at sea, and often under fire, because the Doge had rashly sworn a solemn oath to remain.

On the thirtieth of December Pisani was driven to such extremities as to be forced to promise that unless Carlo Zeno appeared in forty-eight hours the fleet should return to the Lido, in spite of the Doge and his vow. There was no reason at all why Zeno should be expected; it was a mere empty promise, but it gained time; something could still be done in two days and two nights.

He laboured and fought on, and the short limit of time expired with the dawn of New Year's Day. Zeno had not come, and Pisani's men would not stay another hour. By his promise he must let them go, and it needed not his wisdom to foresee that their defection meant the fall of Venice, the end of the Republic, the general destruction of the insensate population themselves with all they had. It was of little use to have been their idol for years and their victorious dictator for ten days, if they could not bear a little cold and a little hardship for his sake. The day rose wearily for Pisani.

Marble bust of Carlo Zeno, unknown artist; Museo Civico, Room XVI.

Then, from aloft, a sail was sighted. It was the sail of a galley. Another, and another, and another, all galleys unmistakably, they hove in sight above the horizon, eighteen in all. Hostile, or friendly? That was the question. Zeno, or destruction and the end? Then the banner of Saint Mark broke out from the peak of the foremost, and floated fair on the morning breeze. It was Zeno indeed.

And not only had the famous leader himself come at

the one moment of all others when he was most needed, perhaps in his whole life; he came as a victor, bringing prizes and spoil of inestimable value. He had laid waste the Genoese coast, almost to the city itself; he had intercepted Genoese convoys of grain off Apulia, he had harassed the enemy's commerce in the East, and he had captured, off Rhodes, a huge vessel of theirs with five hundred thousand pieces of gold.

All this he told the Doge on board the latter's galley. He had been twice wounded and was not yet recovered, but nothing could diminish his energy nor damp his ardour; at his own request he was stationed at the post of greatest danger, opposite Brondolo, and though the Genoese made a supreme effort to destroy the barriers and get their ships out during a gale, in which some of Zeno's ships dragged their anchors, he drove them triumphantly back into their prison, and blockaded them more securely than ever. In this action he was nearly killed again. An arrow pierced his throat when the gale had driven him under one of the Genoese forts. Lest he should bleed to death he would not pluck out the missile, but remained on deck to save his ship; till, stumbling in the dusk, he fell down an open hatch. He was lifted up senseless, the arrow was withdrawn, and he was half-suffocated by his own blood; but his senses revived, and he had himself turned upon his face, so that the blood might run freely out and allow him to breathe. To such a man it seemed as if nothing short of sudden death outright could be fatal; he refused to leave his

ship, and in a marvellously short space of time he was about his duty again as if nothing had happened.

Meanwhile Pisani pushed the siege and bombarded Chioggia. In his force there were numbers of German and English mercenaries, who came to blows and killed each other by the score; but an English captain named William Gold had authority enough to quell the disorder, and the regular fighting went on.

Pisani continued to bombard Brondolo. The beginnings of artillery were unwieldy in the extreme, it being thought that the main object should be to throw a missile of great size and weight, even at long intervals, rather than to discharge much smaller ammunition with precise aim. One of Pisani's mortars is said to have thrown a marble ball weighing two hundred pounds, and the smallest siege mortars projected masses of one hundred and forty pounds. To clean, load, and once fire one of these clumsy howitzers was often the work of a whole day; but if by any chance the shot took effect, the result was formidable. A single ball from Pisani's great bombard knocked down the church tower of Brondolo with a considerable piece of the ramparts close by, burying Pietro Doria and his nephew under the ruins.

Rom. iii. 289.

The Venetians now held all the approaches to the lagoons from the sea; and by taking the port of Loredo at the mouth of the Adige, they cut off Brondolo and Chioggia from all communication with the Duke of Ferrara, who had hitherto sent supplies of provisions and reinforcements

Rom. iii. 288.

by that way. The time was not far distant when famine must begin to make itself felt among the besieged, and the Venetians redoubled their efforts.

Meanwhile, after the death of Doria, a bold man of original mind, Napoleone Grimaldi, took command of the Genoese. He soon saw that in the existing conditions Brondolo must fall, and that his fleet could never escape. It occurred to him that a canal could be dug straight through the island to the open sea, by which he could bring his ships out during the night, and immediately threaten Venice herself before the Venetian fleet could return.

The work was begun, but the Venetians discovered it in time. Grimaldi had even then no less than thirteen thousand fighting men in Brondolo and Chioggia; the Venetians had barely eight thousand. They had appealed to the famous English condottiero John Hawkwood, whose engagement to fight for the Milanese had just expired; but he either thought the Venetians were playing a losing game, or else he found more lucrative employment elsewhere, for after promising his assistance he failed to come. Venice now called for volunteers, and all sorts and conditions of men appeared in answer to the call. Among them there was even a canon of Saint Mark's, Giovanni Loredan, with four of his servants.

In the absence of any famous condottiero to take the command, the Signory condescended to appoint Carlo Zeno to the command of the land troops. He saw that if Grimaldi's project was to be frustrated,

Brondolo must be taken at once, and the whole Genoese force must be driven into Chioggia. He was as good a soldier as he was a sailor, and he did not fail. His practice in all warfare was to take every possible precaution before fighting at all, and then to engage with the most reckless and furious energy.

Deceived by Zeno's manœuvres, the whole garrison of Brondolo was drawn out in the direction of 'Little' Chioggia. Seizing the opportune moment, Zeno then succeeded in throwing himself between Brondolo itself and its small army, at the very moment when the latter was attacked by Zeno's soldiers of fortune. The whole body of Genoese fled in a panic towards the bridge of Chioggia, trampling upon each other, pursued and cut to pieces by Zeno. Under the weight of the fugitives the bridge broke, and hundreds were drowned in the canal, while the Venetians literally slew thousands within a quarter of a mile of the bridge head. That night a perfect suit of armour could be bought for a ducat—just fifteen shillings.

Brondolo was lost that day. And worse followed, for though the Genoese commander threatened to hang every fighting man who left Chioggia—if he could catch him—the garrison deserted in great numbers during the night, many of them being Paduans and subjects of Carrara, who had not far to go in order to reach their homes.

It was clear to Grimaldi that since this last defeat he could expect no further help except from Genoa itself; and, in fact, a fleet of twenty galleys had left

that city almost a month before Brondolo had fallen. When this was known the Venetian soldiers clamoured



MOONLIGHT NIGHT, S. M. DELL' ORTO

to be allowed to attack Chioggia, and drive out the Genoese before succour could reach them. But

neither Pisani nor Zeno would hear of this, and bravely assumed the whole responsibility of a protracted siege, well knowing that Chioggia was a most dangerous place to attack, but that it must inevitably yield to famine at last. So the winter wore on and still the besiegers and the besieged faced each other, each side wondering, perhaps, how long the other would persist.

For Venice herself, accustomed as she was to draw all her supplies from a distance, was beginning to lack corn, and it at last became necessary to send Taddeo Giustiniani with a convoy of ships to Southern Italy in order to bring back wheat. On his return he was overtaken by the new Genoese fleet, beaten and taken prisoner, and soon afterwards the enemy appeared before Venice. The corn had already arrived in safety and all danger of famine was relieved, for Giustiniani had sent the laden ships on before him, protected by half his squadron; but its safety had cost him the other half and his own liberty.

The enemy's new fleet was commanded by Maruffo, a man of action, who now did his best to tempt Pisani to a naval engagement; but the Venetian admiral stubbornly refused to be drawn into a fight, and pursued the siege of Chioggia with obstinate determination. It is clear that as the Genoese fleet could not possibly get inside the lagoons, and could do no damage from without, Pisani's refusal to fight was equivalent to paralysing the new fleet; it was as useless, for a time, as if it had not existed. On the other hand, Pisani successfully intercepted more than

eighty barges laden with food supplies which Carrara attempted to send to the beleaguered town, and Chioggia was approaching the last extremity of famine.

The besieged then began to pull down some of the wooden houses of Chioggia in order to make rafts, with which they hoped to cross the shallow lagoon, and in some way to effect a junction with Maruffo's fleet; but Pisani's cannon sunk many of these rafts, or punts, and the remainder were either intercepted by Zeno or forced back to Chioggia.

Rom. iii. 291.

Even the drinking water was now failing, and the besieged sent representatives to make terms with the Doge. For in spite of the murmurs of the elderly senators, who were obliged by mere decency to remain at the scene of action so long as the chief of the Republic refused to leave it, Contarini insisted upon abiding by his oath to the very letter. He answered that there could be no terms at all: Chioggia must surrender unconditionally.

During two days longer the city held out, and in that short time secret agents attempted to sow sedition amongst the mercenaries in the service of Venice, and even tried to send letters to Carrara in order to concert a last desperate attempt for freedom; but the dissatisfaction of the condottieri was easily appeased by a promise of more money, and the messengers to Padua were caught. On the twenty-fourth of June Chioggia surrendered.

Then, from the lost town, came forth all that

remained of the strong garrison, four thousand one hundred and seventy Genoese and two hundred Paduans, ghastly and emaciated, and more like moving corpses than living beings. At the same time, seventeen galleys were handed over to the Venetians, the war-worn remains of the great armada.

With the fall of Chioggia the war was over, and the Doge's vow was fulfilled. He returned in triumph to Venice, and was met at San Clemente by the Bucentaur with his counsellors and the heads of the Quarantie, with a vast number of boats in which the population came out to greet their chief, and to gaze upon the captive Genoese galleys, which were towed in with their banners at half-mast. The promised largesses were distributed to the mercenary troops, and the English captain, William Gold, who had rendered services of great value, received for his share five hundred ducats, the equivalent in actual modern coin of three hundred and seventy-five pounds sterling, a very large sum in those days.

Triumphal return of Andrea Contarini, Paolo Veronese; Hall of the Great Council.

Maruffo continued to cruise in the Adriatic with an efficient fleet several months after the surrender of Chioggia, and Pisani was sent out against him. After recapturing Capodistria and ravaging the coasts of Dalmatia, the Venetian admiral came upon the enemy off Apulia. In the engagement that followed the Genoese were finally put to flight, but Pisani himself was mortally wounded. He was taken ashore at Manfredonia, and there ended his heroic life.

His body was brought back to Venice, where the news of his death had been received with universal grief; the Doge, the Senate, and the whole city attended his magnificent funeral, and he was buried in the church of Sant' Antonio, where a statue was put up to him, which has since been removed to the principal hall of the Arsenal.

Statue of Vittor Pisani, Armoury of the Arsenal.

Pisani's place was filled by Carlo Zeno, to whom belongs the honour of having finally ended the war by driving the enemy into the very harbour of Genoa. The struggle between the two republics had lasted for centuries, the war which ended it had been protracted through six and a half years, and there was much difficulty in agreeing upon articles of peace between Venice on the one hand, and on the other Genoa, King Louis of Hungary, and Francesco Carrara. At first sight, on reviewing this treaty, one might be tempted to suppose that Venice obtained no advantages actually equivalent to the immense sacrifices she had made during the war; but in reality this would be very far from the truth. Genoa had given even more, and had been altogether defeated in the end; her power was broken for ever, and her long rivalry with Venice was at an end, whereas the political importance of Venice continued to increase, and no one would have thought of questioning her right to be considered one of the great European powers.

As an example of what a devoted and patriotic people can and will do in defence of their liberties, the war of Chioggia stands high in the annals of the

world; as a feat of generalship Pisani's blockade of the Genoese fleet is perhaps unrivalled, and the military operation by which Carlo Zeno tempted the whole garrison of Brondolo out of that town in the morning, and drove it like a flock of sheep into Chioggia before sunset, is a feat of arms the like of which is not recorded of many captains.

Venice kept all her promises, though they had been made under the pressure of extreme necessity. Thirty families of burghers were chosen from amongst those that had made the greatest sacrifices for the public safety, and on the fifth of September the heads of the houses were solemnly invested with the right to sit in the Great Council, and with all the other privileges of nobility for themselves and their descendants for ever. They presented themselves before the Doge in the church of Saint Mark's, each carrying a lighted torch of pure wax; when they had heard mass they went to the Doge's palace to assist, from the windows, at a series of festivities and games. It is sad to record that a certain Leonardo dall' Agnello, a merchant of grain and forage, who had literally given all he possessed for the war, died of grief because his name did not appear in the list of the newly enrolled.

The aged Doge Contarini survived exactly two years after his triumph, and went down to his grave in the full blaze of his final success and of the country's growing glory. Amongst those proposed as candidates to succeed him, Carlo Zeno was mentioned; but such a choice would have been contrary to all

precedent and tradition, for it was thought that the election of the bravest captain of his day might be dangerous to the Republic; and, moreover, most of the patricians, whose advice during the war he had consistently declined to follow, were jealous of him and predisposed against him. But the war with the Carrara was not yet really at an end, in spite of the treaty of peace, and there was still much for Zeno to do. The electors chose Michele Morosini to fill the ducal throne.



THE CARMINE

XV

VENICE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

As an epoch, if not precisely as a period of a hundred years, the fourteenth century in Venetian history closes with the war of Chioggia, as it began also before the year 1300 with the closure of the Great Council. For the final defeat and ruin of the Genoese, Venice made the supreme heroic effort necessary to establish her greatness; thenceforth none questioned it, and with the

attainment of her highest national aim ended the noblest page in her history.

The Venetians of the first period were at once brave and prudent; they were at times needlessly harsh in judging those whom they believed dangerous to the Republic, but they were sincere, and they found means to make other nations respect their country as they respected it and loved it themselves.

After Chioggia, Venice was both feared and admired, but it is not possible to feel much sympathy with her sumptuous social life, nor with a Government that seems to have been for ever preoccupied with its search for secret enemies; nor, indeed, with its too docile working people, or its soldiers who so willingly obeyed the commands of the foreign condottieri under whom they were too often led to battle.

We look on her history and judge her by imaginary standards, which were never hers. We feel that at the end of the fourteenth century she entered upon a mistaken course in which she obstinately persevered to the end; we are sure that she should have been above any mere petty jealousy of her neighbours, and that she should have used all her strength in defence of her maritime trade and her colonies; we would have had her abide by the old law of 1274, which forbade a Venetian to own estates on the mainland of Italy; we consider that she was blinded to her true interests by all sorts of intrigues, and that she neglected her trade in order to put herself on the same war-footing as her adversaries, though she had not their natural aptitude

for warfare; that she drained her treasury to pay grasping condottieri, and spent on futile campaigns the resources which had hitherto fed her commerce. All this we are to some extent justified in concluding, and upon those points we judge her, as we should strongly object to being judged.

Nevertheless, all this is but the criticism of speculative moralists and philosophers, a class of well-meaning persons whose influence in the world has never been large. Unhappily for philosophy and morality, they are but too easily answered by the sledge-hammer argument of success. In plain fact, Venice survived, and grew great, and was a power during four hundred years after she adopted her ultimate formula of existence, and in the end she died, not by the hand of the enemies at home or abroad whom she had successfully baffled for centuries, but of sheer old age and marasmal decline after a life of eleven hundred years, during which she was never at any time subject to a foreign power, or a foreign prince, was never once occupied by a foreign army—and was never bankrupt! Unfortunately for sentiment, no European nation, not ancient Rome herself, can point to such a past, and the suggestion that Venice might have done much better by acting much more sentimentally is utterly futile. It is a good deal as if, when the 'oldest inhabitant' of a village has just died after utterly beating all other records of longevity, some well-meaning old woman should say: 'Ah, but he would have lived much longer if he had taken my advice.'

It is useless, I think, to inquire whether the complicated machinery of Venetian government would have worked with the same results if any part of it had been altogether removed. No one of the many parts had been made arbitrarily, still less had any then been called into existence to afford lucrative posts for favourites, as has happened hundreds of times in the existence of other nations. The machinery had grown constantly, as more and more was required of it, but it had never stopped, nor had it ever been taken to pieces for repairs, like the British Constitution, for instance. It was a government of suspicion and precaution, which took it for granted that every man, from the Doge down, would do his worst, and provided against the worst that any man could do. This is true; but has any Government ever thriven which reckoned on man's virtues? The plain reason why all the many artificial communities founded by good men, from Buddha to Fourrier, or even Thomas Hughes, have been failures is that they have all reckoned on good motives in men, rather than on bad ones. Venice systematically expected the worst, and when she was disappointed it was to her own advantage. Christianity begins by telling us with energetic emphasis that we are all miserable sinners, and threatens us with torments which, if they could be brought before our eyes, would turn the hair of young men grey. Venice followed very much the same principle. Venice had the Pozzi; Christianity has Hell.

As for the manner in which Venice conducted her

wars, by the aid of condottieri of reputation, she only followed the example of most of her neighbours. The practice had many advantages, one of which undoubtedly was that the prince, or the republic, was not bound to support an idle, restless, and ambitious general and his force of trained soldiers in times of peace. The professional fighter was sent for when needed, as one sends for the doctor. He made his bargain, beat the enemy if he could, was paid for the work, and went his way with his army in search of occupation elsewhere.

Of course, he might turn traitor at any moment, if it were to his advantage, and he was never inclined to annihilate an enemy to-day who might be his patron and employer to-morrow. The Italian noun 'condottiero' is derived from the word 'condotta,' which is not easily translatable into another language, but means a kind of articled engagement for a stipulated purpose. In modern times the municipal physician of each small commune is termed the 'medico condotto,' as it were the articled doctor who is bound to render certain services without charge, because he is paid by the town.

The rise of the condottieri was the result of the change in the manner of fighting which took place early in the Middle Ages, upon the introduction and development of armour. The first professional fighters were the aristocracy, who spent their time almost entirely in the daily practice of arms, and kept themselves in perfect training by constant exercise. To do this successfully they worked much harder than the

peasants in the fields, who were their natural enemies, and who would have destroyed them altogether if they had not maintained their physical superiority by every means in their power. And this superiority they gradually supplemented by means of armour which by



RIO DE S. PANTALEONE

degrees reached such completeness as to make the man and his horse practically invulnerable, before the invention of gunpowder. A score of well-equipped and well-trained knights could cut to pieces ten times their number of men armed only with swords and

shields. Moreover, the nobles did not hesitate to hang any rich plebeian who dared to wear steel.

The first soldiers of fortune were penniless nobles who owned nothing but their armour and horses, and often won wealth by fighting for any one who would employ them; and they insisted upon being treated with the deference due to their station. But little by little, as more fighters were thus employed, young men of unusual physical strength regularly went to work to train themselves for the profession, because it was a lucrative one, and was not at first very dangerous; for I repeat that before gunpowder men-at-arms were not easily hurt, and as for noble lineage, the employer cared nothing for that provided that the fighter knew his business. These fighters very naturally attached themselves by scores and by hundreds to any leader who had the reputation of gaining much booty, and of being generous in distributing it. I believe that there was very little good faith, and no trust at all, between the condottiero and his own band; on the contrary, I think the relation must have been very like that which exists on almost every merchant-vessel between the captain and his crew, and every man who has been to sea knows what that is. The best crew in the world have a way of regarding the captain as their natural enemy which is very surprising to a landsman; yet if they have confidence in his seamanship and navigation, and if he does not starve them, they will obey him with a zeal which to the uninitiated greenhorn looks like devotion, and they

will even run great risks for him beyond what the law could require of them. He, on his side, has been before the mast himself and knows exactly what they think about him, and that if he allows them the slightest liberty or indulgence beyond what he and they know to be just, he will lose all control over them. In the study of the mediæval fighting bands and their relations to their leaders, an historian might learn a vast deal in the course of a six weeks' voyage on a big modern sailing vessel.

It happened sometimes that after a very great victory the condottiero received extensive lands besides a large sum of money, and that he was formally adopted into the aristocracy of the country for which he had fought. In that case, he either disbanded his men and retired from the profession, or, if he was still ambitious, he entered upon a career of warfare and conquest on his own account. Francesco Sforza's father began life as a peasant, and he himself ended as Duke of Milan, and left a great name which has descended to modern times.

The fifteenth century, as being the principal period of transition throughout Europe from ancient to modern warfare, was essentially the age of the condottieri, and many famous mercenary captains were employed by Venice,—so many, indeed, that a review of their services would be almost a consecutive history of Venice's relations with her neighbours during that time. There was Carmagnola and Gattamelata, and Francesco Sforza; there was Bartolommeo Colleoni,

and Roberto Sanseverino, and there was even a Duke of Mantua. As Daru says, the Republic grew accustomed to keeping princes in her pay.

Even after the war of Chioggia was over, Venice was still involved in the long struggle with the Carrara of Padua, which was to end with the almost total extermination of that family. Francesco Carrara had, indeed, signed the peace, like the Genoese and the King of Hungary. The Genoese power was broken for ever, and King Louis was far away and not anxious to renew a fruitless war now that his strongest allies were crippled; but Carrara had emerged from the contest practically unweakened, and Venice was not likely to forget that he had done everything in his power to further and abet the aims of Genoa.

There is no history more complicated and hard to bear in mind than that of the republics and principalities of northern Italy in the Middle Ages, as the crimes by which the despots kept their power were more tortuous than any committed before or since. In the events which led to the annexation of Padua by Venice two other states played a part, namely, the principality of Verona, held by an illegitimate descendant of the Scala family, who had incidentally murdered his own brother, the latter's mistress, and all their children; and the great dukedom of Milan, then ruled by Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, who had, in
1385. the ordinary course of events, got rid of his brother Bernabò by poison, and kept a couple of nephews locked up in a dungeon.

Antonio della Scala was jealous of Carrara's influence, and made a secret treaty with Venice, under which, and



THE CHURCH OF THE FRARI

for a consideration of twenty-five thousand florins monthly, he undertook the conquest of Padua, and

the return of Treviso to the Republic. But he was badly beaten by Carrara, who succeeded in bribing two high officials in Venice, an avogador and a member of the Forty. These were, of course, discovered by the Government and duly executed.

Carrara, now fearing a regular war with Venice, sought the alliance of Milan, ostensibly against Verona, *Rom. iii. 319, sqq.* and Galeazzo at once saw a chance of profit for himself in granting the request. He had always hoped to make mischief between Padua and Verona, and it is said that after Scala's defeat he had secretly offered help to both sides at the same time. *1387.* He now agreed with Carrara to divide and share Scala's principality of Verona. But when Scala was beaten and ruined, Galeazzo naturally refused to let Carrara have any part of the promised spoil.

Scala took refuge in Venice, where he received a pension, but it was not long before Galeazzo succeeded in having him poisoned; and almost at the same time Galeazzo made a secret treaty with Venice to rob Carrara of his principality. Venice introduced a clause into the agreement which really showed genius. Lest Galeazzo Visconti should serve her as he had served Carrara, the Republic required that he should leave his dukedom in charge of Carlo Zeno while he prosecuted the war in person.

Carrara now turned to Venice for help against Visconti, pretending to know nothing of the secret alliance, and begging that the Republic would use her

influence to make Galeazzo keep to the terms of his public treaty. This appeal was received with stony indifference. Carrara, who believed that both Venice and Visconti were actuated by motives of personal hatred against himself, resigned in favour of his son, Francesco the Younger, and retired to Treviso.

But his departure did not improve matters, and his son was soon obliged to surrender Padua to the allies, on condition of receiving a safe conduct for himself and his retinue to visit Pavia and return. This was given, and oath was taken on the Blessed Sacrament that it should be respected. He went to Milan, and was well received, and it appears that he acted the part of a man delighted with his treatment, and only anxious to be pleased and amused. It is almost needless to say that before long he was plotting against Visconti's life, and that Visconti discovered the plan, and gave orders for his assassination. He fled to France with his young wife Taddea, but was pursued by Visconti's emissaries, and embarked only just in time to save himself and her. She was soon to become a mother, and she suffered terribly from the rough sea. Carrara and she landed; she was placed upon an ass and he walked by her side, while the small vessel kept in sight of the shore. And so they proceeded, embarking again, and once more going ashore as a fresh gale began to blow. They came along the Riviera, well knowing that they were tracked by Visconti; once, at Torbio, they were warned by a friendly person not to enter the town, and they

slept in a half-ruined church by the sea-shore. At Ventimiglia the little party excited the suspicions of the Podestà and Carrara was arrested, after having succeeded in placing his wife in safety on board the vessel, but was released again, because by good fortune the officer who arrested him had once served his father. So they went on, through countless adventures, sometimes disguised as German pilgrims, sometimes barely eluding Visconti's search by hiding in bushes by the roadside; they even slept in a stable. They sought refuge in Florence and stayed there awhile, went on to Bologna, and were refused all assistance; and at last the fallen prince received offers to join the fighting band of John Hawkwood, the English condottiero. He almost reached Venice, and was within a stone's throw of Padua, then went back to Florence, and was suddenly elevated to the dignity of ambassador from the Florentines to the Duke of Bavaria, whose sister had been the wife of the murdered Bernabò Visconti, and the mother of the rightful but imprisoned heir to the dukedom of Milan.

It is not within the province of this work to narrate these wild adventures in detail. It is enough to say that the struggle between the several parties was carried on for years, with no scruple and little humanity. The policy of the different governments shifted continually; after allying herself with Visconti, Venice soon began to plot against him, judging that a ruined neighbour like Carrara would be safer than one too powerful, as Giovanni Galeazzo was growing to be;

and so the fugitive couple was taken into favour again by the Republic. Although Visconti's military governor in Padua, when Carrara came to take his own again, sent him word that a man must be a fool who, having left the house by the door, expected to return by the window, yet Carrara soon got the better of him by the help of Venice and the Duke of Bavaria.

What is most amazing in the history of the Italian principalities and republics is that any one of them should ever, under any circumstances, have believed in the promises made by any other. An open treaty was almost always supplemented by a secret one of a precisely contrary nature; oaths ratified upon the faith of the Blessed Sacrament were broken as lightly as lovers' vows; the safe conduct given by a prince or a republic was generally the prelude to an assassination; and governments had not even that temporary regard for their obligations which is vulgarly described as honour among thieves. Writers of history have accustomed us too long to consider that these vices of mediæval Italian diplomacy were manifestations of the deepest craft and of the most profound subtlety, and we have been taught to look upon Macchiavelli as a master in the art of political dissimulation. Men of northern extraction who, by the accidents of birth, education, and long acquaintance, are thoroughly acquainted with the Latin character, cannot but smile at such a judgment. In all ages, Latins, and especially Italians, have deceived each other, but have rarely succeeded in deceiving us. The wiles of Cæsar Borgia

would not have imposed upon an average English schoolboy. In her diplomatic relations with northern Europe, Italy has almost invariably been the victim of that profound duplicity which rests upon a carefully cultivated reputation for respecting the truth. It is the man whose word can generally be trusted who possesses the greatest power of deception when he chooses to perjure himself. It was not the complication of the Italian nature which produced the complicated state of Italian politics in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but its extreme simplicity, which made Italian princes the easy victims of the most transparent deceptions.

1405. Padua taken from Carrara by the Venetians, Francesco Bassano; Ceiling of Sala dello Scrutinio.

On the other hand, after a long lapse of time, and in the presence of documents proceeding from opposite sources, it is now so hard to ascertain the simple truth, that the story of the younger Carrara is told in two quite opposite ways. The version I have given seems to be the more reasonable one; the other tells us that it was not Visconti, but Venice, that persecuted the young couple, and that it was not Venice, but Visconti, who in the end recalled them to Padua. Be that as it may, Carrara was once more in possession of his principality in 1392. It seems to me thoroughly in accordance with the policy of Venice to have thus installed him again at her very gates and under her protection, in order to crush him and his family the more effectually, as she soon afterwards did. Fourteen years later Venice had literally

1406. Rom. iv. 40.

forced him to declare war against her, and had sent the invincible Carlo Zeno to command her armies; the inevitable result had followed, and Carrara himself with two of his sons were prisoners in the ducal palace. The three were condemned to death, and were strangled in prison.

The private execution of the noble prisoners of war was not acknowledged by the Government, and the city was gravely informed that they had, all three, died of colds or coughs, vaguely described as catarrh. But the people were not deceived, and were certainly not displeased; and within twenty-four hours a triumphant song was bawled through the streets of Venice, of which the burden was 'A dead man makes no war.' The words have remained a proverb in Italy.

The elder Carrara, long a state prisoner in Milan, had been duly poisoned with 'magical liquors' by the five court physicians of Visconti in 1393. One of the younger Carrara's younger sons died in Florence very soon after his father, but the fourth survived to be murdered in his turn nearly thirty years later.

I find in Smedley's *Sketches from Venetian History* a very curious and interesting note with regard to him and to the disappearance of his race.

The family name of Carrara, like that of the Scottish Macgregors, was proscribed. A branch of the House which still (1831) exists, or did exist not long ago, at Padua, was compelled to adopt the name of Pappa-fava, a *sobriquet* the origin of which has been traced as follows by Gataro. Marsilietto da Carrara,

Smedley, I. chap. x. note.

Signor of Padua for one short month before his assassination, in 1345, when a boy, was lodged, during a pestilence which raged in the capital, in a monastery at Brondolo. 'Now in all the great religious houses it is an ancient custom to have vegetable broth at dinner every day of the week. On Monday it is made of beans (*fave*), on Tuesday of haricots, on Wednesday of chick-peas, and so on. Marsilietto was so fond of beans that it always appeared a thousand years to him till the Monday came round, and, when it did, he devoured the beans with such delight as was a pleasure to behold. He was, therefore, nicknamed *Pappa-fava* (Bean-glutton) by the rest, and his descendants have retained the name.'

The threefold murder of the Carrara, for it was nothing else, must be regarded as the first result of the continental development of Venice after the war of Chioggia, a development which brought her into closer contact with a number of thoroughly unscrupulous princes and governments. If her misdeeds can be condoned at all, it must be upon that ground; but I find it impossible to agree with Mr. Hazlitt, the author of a recent valuable history entitled *The Venetian Republic*, in considering that, on the whole, Carrara had something like a fair trial, and deserved his fate. The whole body of evidence goes to show that, for his times, he was an exceptionally frank and courageous prince, and much of the so-called proof that was used against him in the end was obtained by the merciless application of torture. Mr. Hazlitt's real love of Venice has, I think, prejudiced him too much in her favour in this instance, and his affectionate industry has discovered everything

that can be said in her defence, without bestowing the same care on a fair statement of the other side. In a similar way, a little farther on, he speaks of the outrageous condemnation of Carlo Zeno to a year's imprisonment as an act not unjustifiable, because it was proved that Zeno had actually received a small sum of money from Carrara; but Mr. Hazlitt passes over Zeno's defence in silence. The invincible warrior admitted, indeed, that he had received the money, but his explanation was perfectly simple and honourable. He had lent the little sum to the prince when the latter had been an outcast, wandering through Italy with his young wife, and Carrara had repaid the money when he had regained Padua. Zeno was over seventy years of age at the time when he was condemned to a year's imprisonment in a dungeon for this act of charity and its consequences; he was the bravest and truest Venetian of his times; he had saved his country from destruction, and had served her with the most perfect integrity under the most trying circumstances, and more than once in the face of her basest ingratitude; he reaped the reward which fell to the share of almost every distinguished Venetian, for he was feared by the Government, hated by the fellow-nobles whom he had outstripped in honour, and condemned by men who were not worthy to loose the latchet of his shoes. And he was convicted on account of a paltry sum of three hundred ducats, lent to a wanderer in distress and duly returned—he, who had given thousands from his own resources to satisfy the demands of the sordid

mercenaries whom Venice had employed in the war of Chioggia! In trying to make out that he was treated with justice, Mr. Hazlitt attempts to prove too much. Before quitting a point to which I shall not return, let me, however, testify to the value of Mr. Hazlitt's work, and to the great and useful industry with which he has consulted and accurately quoted a number of authorities not only inaccessible to the ordinary reader, but rarely mentioned, and in some cases not at all, by such historians as Daru, Romanin, and even Sismondi.

The stern justice of former days degenerated into cold cruelty in the fifteenth century. When the Republic set a price on the heads of Carrara's two youngest sons, after vainly attempting to get possession of their persons by diplomatic means, they were mere boys.

When Zeno was called before the Council of Ten on the night of the twentieth of January 1406, the warrant for his examination authorised the use of torture, if it should seem necessary. But even the Ten hesitated at that. He admitted and explained the matter of the money lent and repaid; his explanation of his reasons for having received and talked with an envoy from Padua were as honourable as they were clear, and the Ten being mercifully inclined that night, did not proceed to stretch Venice's greatest hero on the rack, but only condemned him to the pozzi for a year, and to the perpetual loss of all offices he held.

Rom. iv. 42.

He accepted the sentence without a murmur, and

his frame of steel did not permanently suffer from the confinement, for he lived twelve years longer in perfect



PONTE FIORENZOLA

health, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, was once more in command of the troops of the Republic, defeated the Cypriotes, and died at last in the full possession of his

faculties, leaving his name to undying glory, and the memory of his judges to eternal shame.

The Venetians had buried the elder and the younger Carrara with great magnificence, dressed in rich velvet, with their golden spurs on their heels and their swords by their sides. When Zeno died at last, it was necessary that his funeral should outshine at least the obsequies accorded to the murdered foes of the Republic. The Doge and the Senate attended, and the citizens followed him to his grave in their thousands; but it is good to read that what was left of him was borne to its last rest on the shoulders of brave seamen who had served with him, fought under him, and shed their blood with him. He lies in the church of Santa Maria della Celestia, where you may see his tomb to this day.

An age of transition is sure to be an age of contrasts. One may compare, for instance, the Doge Michel Steno with his successor, Tomaso Mocenigo, the extreme of extravagance with the extreme of economy, the increasing indebtedness of each department of the State with the excessive severity of the magistrates whose duty it was to watch suspected persons; and from the officials who 'defended the faith' one may turn to the wild band of noble youths who called themselves the 'Compagnia della Calza,' the 'Hose Club,' and whose chief occupation was to amuse and be amused.

The laws were full of contrasts too. The Doge Michel Steno, the first of the fifteenth century, kept

four hundred horses in his stables, and by way of adding absurdity to extravagance he dyed their coats yellow, according to the ridiculous custom of the times. Yet he was forbidden by law to blazon his coat-of-arms on the ducal palace, or, in fact, anywhere else, and he was not allowed to have himself addressed as 'My Lord.' The law required him to wear a mantle of royal ermine, and to provide his servants with two new liveries each year; yet he could be treated like a boy, and told to be silent and sit down in Council, as actually happened to him a few years after his election.

Mutinelli, Commercio.

The story is worth telling. I have spoken of the 'Avogadori del Commun,' who were officers of considerable importance and power, and not at first noble. They stood, in a manner, between private individuals and the State in matters of law, civil and criminal; partly in the position of a modern attorney-general, partly as representing the exchequer, but they had a right of interference in many other matters. Two of them were bound to be present at every Council, including that of the Ten, arrayed in long red robes, and they had power to suspend all judgments during three days in cases which, if not positively criminal, concerned the execution of laws and edicts. Though at first not nobles, and perhaps for that very reason, it had always been their business to act as a Heralds' Office for the purpose of examining into all titles of nobility and claims for seats in the Grand Council.

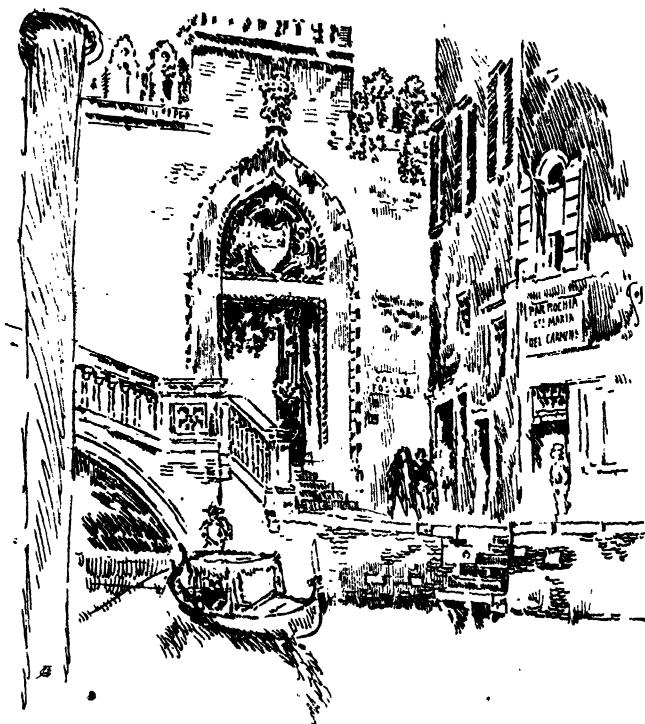
Armand Baschet, Archives.

Now it happened on the second of June in 1410 that a certain noble called Donato Michiel proposed the repeal of a law which had been approved six years earlier by the Great Council; the avogadori opposed the motion, and accused the patrician of encroaching on their rights. But the Doge Steno, agreeing with the noble, lost his temper, and spoke sharply to the avogadori. Now the ducal oath forbade the Doge to speak in defence of any one unless he could obtain permission to do so from four out of six of his counsellors. Three of the latter now tried to call him to order, but he would not listen to them. 'Messer Doge,' they then said bluntly, 'let your Serenity sit down and be silent, and leave the avogadori quite free to do their duty!'

Two other counsellers now took the Doge's side, and he went on talking; whereupon the avogadori imposed on him a fine and threatened to bring an action against him. Both parties grew more and more obstinate, and the quarrel lasted several days, until some intelligent persons discovered that the Doge had not broken his ducal oath, because the avogadori had not yet formally made accusation against Donato Michiel, so that what the Doge had said had not been said in defence of any one, there being no legally accused person, but as a general statement of opinion; and in this way the affair was patched up without scandal.

Under the rule of Tomaso Mocenigo, Steno's successor, the Republic seems to have recovered some-

thing of its pristine vigour, and the germs of internal corruption were retarded in their growth for a time. Mocenigo was as austere, as prudent, and as active as



LAND GATEWAY, PALAZZO FOSCARI

Steno had been extravagant, hot-tempered, and careless. Venice now finally obtained possession of Friuli and Dalmatia, which made her mistress of the Adriatic as far as Corfu.

Mocenigo was a man of iron will and inflexible principle. Nothing gives a clearer idea of his character than his own recapitulation of his nine years' reign, when he lay dying of old age.

On his deathbed he assembled about him the principal officers of the Republic, and drew a clear picture of the condition of the country at the end of his administration, giving his hearers at the same time valuable advice as to the election of his successor, which they unfortunately did not follow. I quote the speech in full :—

My Lords, by the weakness in which I find myself, I know that I am near the end of my life; wherefore, since I owe great obligation to this my country, which has not only nourished and brought me up, but has also granted me as much pre-eminence and as many honours as can be conferred upon one of her citizens, and although I have always been devoted to my country with my life and with such poor means as fortune gave me, yet I know that by this I have not repaid even a small part of all the good which I have received; and being brought to a limit where I can do no more for my country, it is for my own satisfaction that I desired to assemble all of you here, that I might commend to you this Christian city and exhort you to love your neighbours, and to do justice, and to choose peace and preserve it, as I have endeavoured to do. In my time four millions of debts have been paid off, and there are other six millions owing, which debt was incurred for the wars of Padua, Vicenza, and Verona; we have paid every six months two instalments of the debts, and have paid all my officers and regiments. This our city now sends out in the way of business to different parts of the world ten millions of ducats' worth yearly by ships and galleys, and the profit is not

Rom. iv. 93.

less than two million ducats a year. In this city there are three thousand vessels of one to two hundred 'anfore' (Venetian register of capacity) with seventeen thousand seamen; there are three hundred larger ships with eight thousand sailors. Every year there go to sea forty-five galleys with eleven thousand sailors, and there are three thousand ship's carpenters and three thousand caulkers. There are three thousand weavers of silk and sixteen thousand weavers of cotton cloth; the houses are estimated to be worth seven millions and fifty thousand ducats. The rents are five hundred thousand ducats. There are one thousand noblemen whose income is from seven hundred to four thousand ducats. If you go on in this manner you will increase from good to better, and you will be the masters of wealth and Christendom; every one will fear you. But beware, as you would be of fire, of taking what belongs to others and of waging unjust war, for God cannot endure those errors in princes. Every one knows that the war with the Turks has made you brave and experienced of the sea; you have six generals fit to fight any great army, and for each of these you have sea-captains, slingers, officers, boatswains, mates, and rowers enough to man one hundred galleys; and in these years you have shown distinctly that the world considers you the leaders of Christianity. You have many men experienced in embassies and in the government of cities, who are accomplished orators. You have many doctors of divers sciences, and especially many lawyers, wherefore numerous foreigners come here for judgment of their differences, and abide by your verdicts. Your mint coins every year a million ducats of gold and two hundred thousand of silver; it also coins yearly eight hundred thousand ducats' worth between 'grossetti, mezzanini, and soldoni.' Fifty thousand ducats of 'grossetti' go every year to Soria, and to the mainland, and other parts; of 'mezzanini' and 'soldoni' one hundred thousand ducats; the rest remains in the country (Venice).

You know that the Florentines send us each year sixteen thousand pieces of cloth, which we make use of (in commerce) in Barbary, in Egypt, in Soria, in Cyprus, in Rhodes, in Roumania, in Candia, in the Morea, and in Istria, and every month the Florentines bring into this city seventy thousand ducats' worth of all sorts of merchandise, which amounts to eight hundred and forty thousand ducats yearly and more; and they take back French woollens, catalans, and crimson, and fine corded wool and silk, gold and silver thread and jewellery, with great advantage to the city. Therefore, be wise in governing such a State, and be careful to watch it and to see that it is not diminished by negligence. You must be very careful as to who is to succeed in my place, for by him the Republic may have much good and much evil. Many of you are inclined to Messer Marino Caravello, who is a worthy man, and deserves that honour for his worthy qualities. Messer Francesco Bembo is a good man, and the same is Messer Giacomo Trevisan; Messer Antonio Contarini, Messer Faustin Michiel, and Messer Alban Badoer, all these are wise and deserving. Many are inclined to Messer Francesco Foscari, and do not know that he is proud and untruthful; he has no principle in his affairs, he has an exaggerated disposition, he grasps at much and holds but little. If he be Doge you will always be at war; he who has ten thousand ducats will not be master of one thousand, he who has two houses will not be the master of one; you will spend gold and silver, reputation and honour, and where you are now the chiefs, you will be the slaves of your soldiers and men-at-arms and of their captains. I could not resist the desire to tell you this opinion of mine. God grant that you may elect the best man, and direct you, and preserve you in peace.

Mocenigo died on the fourth of April 1423.

In spite of his admonitions and of a considerable

opposition, the electors chose Francesco Foscari to succeed him, and henceforth war with Milan became a certainty. It was on the occasion of his election that the last remnant of the people's right of interference was done away with. Hitherto it had been customary to announce each election to the people, adding the words 'if such be your pleasure.' This time the High Chancellor, who, it will be remembered, was never a noble, inquired, with a smile, what would happen if the people answered that it was not their pleasure. The result was that the formula was never used again.

But the people were easily amused and let the nobles do as they pleased, even when, at a later date, the designation 'Venetian Commonwealth' was abandoned, and the word 'Signoria' was officially substituted in its place. This, literally translated, means 'lordship,' but it has long been a convenient custom to make an English word of it, as 'Signory.'

Some idea of the character of Francesco Foscari is given by the following anecdote:—The Giustiniani family had built three palaces on the Grand Canal, one of which had been sold as a residence to the young Duke of Mantua, whom his brother, when dying, had commended to the protection of the Republic. Foscari could not endure the thought that the Giustiniani should still have two palaces finer than his only one, and when the Government sold the third at auction in 1428, he bought it and raised it by building another story in order that it might outdo

Lazzari, Guida.

the others. It was then said to have three hundred and sixty-five windows, and it was valued at twenty thousand ducats, say, at fifteen thousand pounds sterling, which was a vast sum for those days.

Foscari's name recalls dramatic memories, and, to tell the truth, it has frequently been taken in vain by poets and playwrights, and even by some chroniclers and historians. His son Jacopo was not the martyr he has been represented to be, nor was he himself the 'Roman father' of the play. I shall tell the true story—a terrible one enough, even in its accurate form—after briefly reviewing his reign.

The dying Mocenigo had not been altogether wrong in his predictions about Foscari, for before long the Republic was at war with Milan, as the ally of Florence, and was squandering money and men at a disastrous rate. Foscari undoubtedly belonged to the war party, yet in the true interests of his country he really controlled his own fiery nature for some time, and endeavoured to maintain a neutral position with regard to the quarrels of the Visconti with the Florentines, during which it was the constant aim of the latter to break up the alliance which was still in force between Milan and Venice.

Giovanni Galeazzo was dead. His eldest son, Giovanni-Maria, had succeeded him, a maniac who is said to have fed his hounds on human flesh; and he had been dethroned by Facino Cane, and then massacred by the Milanese, as he richly deserved. His brother, Filippo-Maria, when Facino Cane died childless, promptly

married the latter's widow, the unhappy Beatrice da Tenda, in order to inherit something of Facino's popularity and all of his vast estates. This being accomplished, and not caring for her company, as she was twice his age, he brought a false accusation against her, tortured her, and sent her to the scaffold, while she protested her innocence. But this was only an incidental crime, and would doubtless have been forgotten with a hundred others but for the noble bearing of the unfortunate woman throughout the tragedy that ended her life. The historically important fact is that Filippo-Maria determined to recover every inch of the wide territory which had been ruled by his father, and that if he had accomplished his end, Venice would have been required to restore what she had taken from the Milanese.

Florence was at that time in one of her only too frequent phases of ill-luck, yet her hatred for the Visconti was such that she could not resist the temptation to fight Milan under all circumstances. She needed help, of course; above all, she needed money, and Venice was the richest nation in Europe. As has been seen, too, from Mocenigo's dying speech, the two States were in close commercial relations. It was natural, therefore, that Florence should seek assistance of Venice; it was equally natural, according to the old traditions of Venice, that aid should be refused, unless it could be given profitably.

Foscari was for war, but was not able to influence the Senate in favour of the Florentines, to whom he

had always been friendly. It was a stranger and a fugitive, a soldier of fortune of the highest physical



PALAZZO REGINA DI CIPRO

courage, of the lowest origin, and of no principles at all, who turned the scale—no less a personage than the famous condottiero Carmagnola.

This remarkable man's real name was Francesco Bossone, an appellation derived from the village in which he had been born of peasant parents. He had enlisted at an early age, and had attracted the attention and favour of Filippo-Maria Visconti, immediately after Facino Cane's death, by almost catching Ettore Visconti, whom Filippo wished to murder. After this, Carmagnola's advance to fortune was rapid and unchecked. In ten years we find him with the title of Count of Castelnuovo, as Filippo's governor over Genoa, married to a widowed Antonia Visconti, who passed for a daughter of Giovanni Galeazzo; and so he prospered, till he had acquired such wealth that he deemed it safe to invest a part of it in foreign securities. As an especial favour, by a decree of the Great Council of Venice, he was allowed to buy bonds of the Venetian debt with his money, a privilege rarely granted to any foreigner. Before long he had cause to congratulate himself upon this piece of fortune, and upon his own caution, which had led directly to it.

Rom. iv. 106.

Various explanations have been given of his disgrace with Filippo Visconti; it has been said that he lost the prince's favour by the calumnies of people who envied him. Romanin says Filippo grew suspicious of him, because he was too successful and too popular with the troops, and that the envy of courtiers did the rest; that on being recalled from the governorship of Genoa he attempted in vain to obtain an audience of the Duke, and did all he could

1424.

to justify himself; but that, as he failed altogether, he withdrew to Piedmont, and did his best to incite Amadeus of Savoy against Filippo; that the latter then confiscated all his possessions, and arrested his wife and daughters, whom he held as hostages; and that, finally, Carmagnola went to Venice, and offered his
1425. services and those of eighty men-at-arms whom he had with him, the Republic being then on the eve of yielding to the entreaties of Florence and declaring war on Visconti.

The plain truth of all this seems to be that Carmagnola was an unprincipled scoundrel, who meant to be on the winning side whatever happened, and who, being very well informed, foresaw that a league was about to be made, with Venice at its head, which would be in a position to defy his old master. The latter, of course, tried to poison him by secret agents, who failed, were caught, and were duly tortured and hanged by the Venetian Government, which took the diplomatic precaution of not mentioning the Duke of Milan in the case. There is a sameness about the crimes of the Visconti which makes them almost tiresome; Carmagnola was bolder and quite as profound, but the habit of superiority in actual fighting made him underestimate, in the end, the cool prudence of Venice and the many-sided duplicity of the Duke.

Venice accepted the adventurer's offer, and soon afterwards placed him in command of her land army; and before long Mocenigo's prediction was fulfilled, and the Republic was reduced to something like slavery

under the iron hand of the captain she had hired. He, on his part, played a double game from the first, and made up his mind that if he must beat his old master, he would hurt him as little as he could in so doing, and would try to renew secret and friendly relations with him while acting as the Republic's general.

It was about this time that the Doge Foscari made a speech in favour of the Florentine alliance, which was first published by Romanin. It bears the stamp of a genuine report, and much of it is in the Venetian dialect. Foscari argued that unless Venice would help Florence, the latter would shortly be annihilated by Visconti, who would then proceed at once to the destruction of Venice herself. He referred incidentally to a speech just made by Carmagnola, and assured the Republic that under such a general's leadership there was nothing to fear, whereas there was great hope of extending the boundaries of the Republic. He wound up by saying that Visconti aspired to rule all Italy, despised reason, both human and divine, and was always taking other men's property by fraud and deception; and Foscari called upon the Venetians to help in crushing a common enemy, for the perpetual peace of all Italy.

The speech is hot and warlike. Nevertheless Romanin, three pages farther on, declares that it is a great injustice to accuse Foscari of having promoted war, and complains that historians have made the Doge the scapegoat to bear the blame of all the wars in which Venice then became involved. But Romanin was not

only an enthusiastic Venetian; he was also, to some extent, the apologist of the elder Foscari.

The ratification of the league was announced at the end of January 1426, and Carmagnola's definite commission dates from the nineteenth of February. He proceeded to besiege the fortresses of Brescia, allowed the Florentine general to plan the really astonishing entrenchments, looked on while the machinery of attack was set in motion, and departed to follow a long cure of baths at Abano, very much to the disgust of the Republic. He came back in leisurely fashion to the scene of action a few days before the two castles capitulated, in time to take credit for the whole affair, yet almost without having struck a blow at Visconti.

Sept. 15, 1426. Taking of Brescia, Aliense; Sala della Bussola, ducal palace.

Meanwhile Francesco Bembo had transported another force up the Po in a flotilla of small vessels, and farther still up the river Adda, and had actually made a demonstration before Pavia, in the heart of Visconti's dominions. The Duke having failed to poison Carmagnola, tried to burn down the Venetian arsenal by treachery, which was discovered, and his wretched agent was tortured to death in due form.

Pope Martin V., who was a Colonna, and therefore a Ghibelline—the only Ghibelline pope who ever reigned—was the one sovereign in Italy who still favoured Visconti, and he now intervened to make peace. A treaty was patched up by which the Duke lost a good deal of territory, and was bound to set at liberty the wife and daughters of Carmagnola. This was the peace

of 1426, concluded on the thirtieth of December. Little more than a month later, on the fifth of February 1427, the Republic sent for Carmagnola again, for the Duke had simply refused to hand over the fortresses he was to yield by the treaty, and on the twenty-fourth of March Carmagnola and his wife made a sort of triumphal entry into the city.

Oct. 11, 1427. Victory of Carmagnola at Macalò, Francesco Bassano; ceiling, Hall of the Great Council.

In the campaign which followed, though for the most part pursuing his policy of inactivity, in spite of the protests of the Senate and the Doge, Carmagnola condescended to win a battle for Venice at Macalò, which it must be admitted, for his reputation, was a brilliant victory; and he soon asked leave to go and take more baths, as if the whole affair were perfectly indifferent to him. To this the Senate objected, but he was given all manner of rich compensation for his services, and came to Venice on leave. He was received with an ovation.

Bergamo surrenders to Carmagnola, Aliense; Sala della Bussola.

He had, indeed, been opposed to some of the greatest condottieri of the time, such as Francesco Sforza and Piccinino, and the Venetians seem to have valued him, because they were convinced that he could beat any opponent if he pleased, and only required gifts and flattery to rouse him to action. These were lavished on him, and a second peace with Visconti was concluded in April 1428, about fourteen months after the first. It was ratified and announced in May, and again Carmagnola entered Venice in triumph. He was

now formally invested with the great feudal estate of Chiari.

As was to be expected, Visconti again failed to fulfil the conditions of the treaty, and within three years hostilities broke out again. To the amazement and mortification of the Venetian Government, however, Carmagnola now resigned his commission, almost at the moment when he was to have taken command, and there is reason to believe that he was even then secretly negotiating with Visconti. But the Republic could not afford to lose such a man at such a moment; he was offered conditions which must have surpassed even his own tolerably large expectations. Not only was he to possess for himself and all his descendants the great estate of Chiari, with its rental, but another large feudal holding in the territory of Brescia was promised him on the same conditions; if all Lombardy were taken, he was promised the complete restitution of all the domains which Visconti had formerly bestowed upon him; all plunder and all prisoners of war were to be his, the Republic contracting to pay him a certain sum for each prisoner of importance whom he handed over to the Government; as if this were not enough, he was to be crowned Duke of Milan if he could drive out Visconti.

While these astonishing offers were being made to him by Venice, he received more than one letter from the Duke, requesting him to act as an intermediary to make peace. This fact was, of course, soon known to the Venetian Government, and we can hardly be surprised that the Venetians should not have liked the

part which the Duke was thrusting upon a man who had betrayed him, and whom he should have considered as his worst enemy.

Mr. Horatio Brown has conjectured with great acumen that Visconti, who thoroughly understood the character of Carmagnola, as well as that of the Venetian Government, chose the surest means of ruining the condottiero of whom he wished to be rid. Carmagnola, equally flattered by the Duke's secret letters and by the overwhelming offers of the Republic, began to assume airs of superiority which could not but excite the suspicion of a Government whereof suspicion itself was the very foundation and mainspring.

H. Brown, Ven. Studies, 165.

A series of discussions now began between the Senate and Visconti, in which Carmagnola was continually concerned, but it was soon the gossip of the city that the letters which he really sent to the Duke were by no means identical with the drafts of those which he showed the Senate for approbation. It is at least certain that, after war was declared, as was inevitable, Carmagnola showed neither decision nor energy when obliged to face Visconti's army, and allowed himself to be beaten by Francesco Sforza, who was afterwards himself Duke of Milan. He showed all his old energy in Friuli in driving out the Hungarians, whom Visconti had induced to make a descent upon that territory, but he had no sooner come back to Brescia, for which Visconti himself was fighting, than his hesitation returned.

Smedley, in connection with what now happened, quotes the following remarkable passage from the twelfth chapter of Macchiavelli's *Principe*: 'Perceiving that Carmagnola had become cold in their service, they yet neither wished nor dared to dismiss him, from a fear of losing that which he had acquired for them; for their own security, therefore, they were compelled to put him to death.'

The condottiero now received a message from the Signory, requesting him 'to give himself the trouble' of coming to Venice to discuss a new plan of campaign. Completely taken off his guard, he at once left his camp and repaired to the capital, where he was met by eight nobles, who accompanied him to the ducal palace, telling him that the Doge expected him to dinner.

His own small escort was dismissed at the door, and he was ushered into a hall where he waited a few moments. Then came Leonardo Mocenigo and said that the Doge was indisposed, and begged that he would come again on the following day. Carmagnola left the room, followed by the eight nobles. In the courtyard he was about to take the direction which would have led him to the canal where he had left his boat, when the nobles suddenly came up with him and pointed towards the small porch under which was the outer entrance to the prisons.

'This way, Sir Count,' they said. 'But that is not my way,' he answered. 'You are mistaken,' they said, 'this is the best way.' At the same moment, certain gaolers appeared and pushed him through the door of the pozzi. 'I am lost!' he cried, as he went in.

This was on the seventh of April. The manner of



RAMO CORTE DELLA VIDA, S. FRANCESCO DELLA VIDA

the general's arrest may be excused for its lack of

dignity by the necessities of the situation. The man was most undoubtedly a traitor and a villain, but it would have been impossible to seize him in the midst of his own men-at-arms, and the most prudent manner of getting possession of his person was to draw him into an ambush. The wise and merciful fathers of the Republic would assuredly not have hesitated at much worse things; only a few days earlier they had offered twenty-five thousand ducats to a man called Muazzo, employed in Visconti's household, to poison the Duke. The Republic had already fully adopted the progressive methods of its day.

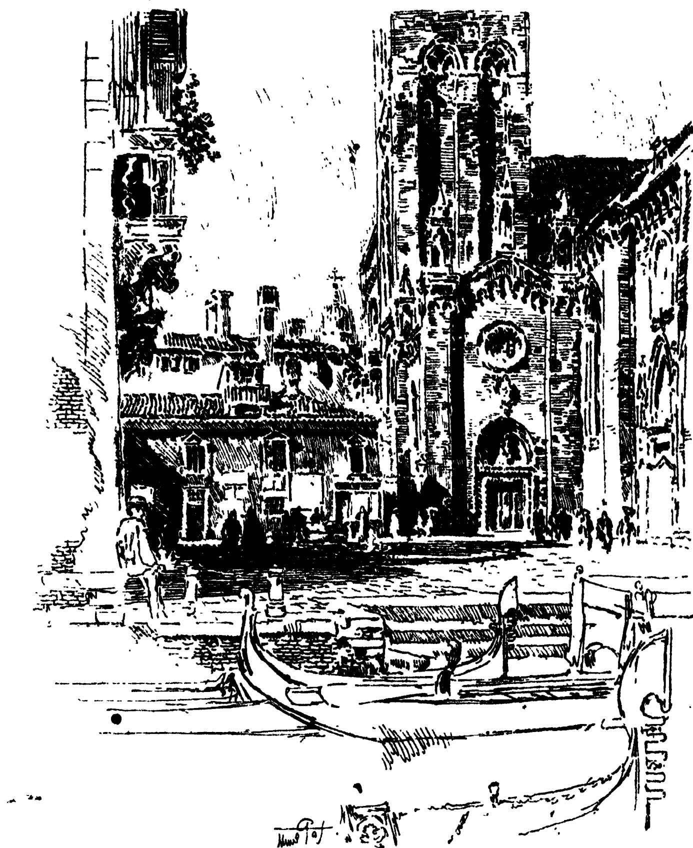
Carmagnola's trial occupied some time, and was conducted on the whole in a regular and legal manner. It began on the ninth of April, and on the eleventh the once all-powerful captain, to whom those who were now his judges had offered the dukedom of Milan, was put to the torture like any other criminal. On the fifth of May the Council of Ten gave its verdict as follows:—

'That this Count Francesco Carmagnola, a public traitor to our dominion, be led to-day, after nones, at the usual hour, with a gag in his mouth and with his hands tied behind his back, according to custom, between the two columns of the Square of Saint Mark's, to the usual place of execution, and that his head be there struck off his shoulders, so that he die.'

Rom. iv. 160.

The sentence goes on to direct that the Count's widow should enjoy the interest of ten thousand ducats of the bonded debt, on condition that she should live

in Treviso. Provision was also made for his unmarried daughters. As for the one who was affianced to



THE FRARI

Sigismondo Malatesta, since there was no divorce law by which he could sever an alliance which was odious,

he adopted the simple expedient of murdering her as soon as he had married her and secured her dowry.

Carmagnola's body was dressed in crimson velvet, and on his severed head was placed the cap which still bears his name. The corpse was borne to the church of San Francesco della Vigna with twenty-four torches, but as it was about to be buried there, the Capuchin monk who had received his last confession appeared in haste and said that the dead man had wished to be buried in the church of the Frari, and he was accordingly laid there, in the cloister. In Venice it was the custom that the clothes of executed persons should be given to the gaoler, not to the headsman; but in this case the Council of Ten decreed that the dress worn by Carmagnola should be handed over with his body to the monks of the church where he was buried, the gaoler receiving ten ducats as compensation.

Rom. iv. 162, note 2.

His remains are now interred in Milan beside those of his wife Antonia in the greater church of Saint Francis. The historian Morosini, quoted by Romanin in a note, judged from his statue that he had the hard face, the cruel eye, and, generally, the unpleasant aspect which denote a man of dangerous character and stubborn purpose; and adds that he was a person of a keen wit, a tough constitution, and great courage, but capricious and of doubtful honesty.

Carmagnola's wife was deeply implicated in his treachery, as is not surprising considering that she was known as the niece of Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, and

was believed by many to be his daughter. She and her children were required to remain in Venice some time



THE CHOIR SCREEN, FRARI

before proceeding to Treviso, and were detained in the convent of the Vergini, the same religious house which had served as a prison for two ladies of the Quirini

family more than a century earlier. It was there that the Countess received the news of her husband's execution, which was announced to her by one of the heads of the Council of Ten and an avogador; and these officials at the same time demanded of her a list of her jewellery, assuring her that the Signory would forgive her misdeeds if she would only show a proper spirit of contrition. I find no account of the poor woman's behaviour on this occasion; but as the sentence was executed only a few hours after it was passed, the news of her husband's death on the scaffold was in all likelihood conveyed to her without any previous notice of his condemnation, and it was accompanied by a cold request for an inventory of her jewels, and a lecture on patience and repentance. Even the imagination of a novelist fails to guess what she must have felt as she listened to the grim men who had just condemned her husband and seen him die, and now wished to be told how many earrings and gold chains and brooches she had in her possession.

She afterwards really retired to Treviso with her daughters, and the Republic continued to pay her the promised allowance, till she one day escaped to Milan, whereby the obligations of the Venetian Government were ended.

Whatever Visconti's plans may have been when he secretly renewed his relations with Carmagnola, whether he intended to compass his ruin or not, it is certain that he bitterly resented his execution, and used every means, including the most inhuman tortures, to discover

the names of those who had accused and condemned the condottiero. If he had succeeded he would no doubt have tried to poison them all.



S. ROCCO

Not long after Carmagnola was imprisoned, Piccinino, one of Visconti's generals, captured in a skirmish at

Valtellina Giorgio Corner, a noble and very influential Venetian, who had acted as Provveditor to oversee Carmagnola's doings in the field. He was taken to Monza, near Milan, and confined there in one of the prisons called 'Forni,' 'ovens,' compared with which the dreaded pozzi seem to have been thought airy and luxurious quarters. He lived to write an account of what he suffered, and I shall give a literal translation of his words, not for the sake of inspiring horror, but because the document bears the unmistakable stamp of truth, and is one of very few of the kind which have come down to us.

Corner was first examined by Gaspare de Grossis, Doctor of Laws.

Rom. iv. 166, note.

I felt as if my soul were being torn out of me, when he said that I must speak the truth; and when I answered that I had told it he gave me a wrench of the rope, and had me drawn up and brought to him like dead, threatening me greatly, that he would have this truth; and seeing me like dead he went away, and I was let down into the 'forno' by a leathern belt, and was placed upon a mattress on the boards, and was given the yolk of an egg and a drink. This was my dinner, and I was not able to get my hand to my mouth in any way; so I lay that night and never could sleep. In the morning came he that watched me, and made fire, and gave me the yolks of two eggs, and with these I remained that day.

On the next Friday morning he came to me and had me bound and drawn up and taken to him, asking if I would tell the truth, and when I said I had told it, he said he wished to know who had told the Signory about the Count (Carmagnola)

having an understanding with my Lord Duke. I said I knew no one who had made the accusation. Seeing that he could get nothing else, he had me fastened to the rope, and gave me a wrench of the rope that I thought I was dying. Seeing that he could get nothing more from me, he made me get up and had my arms set (they were dislocated by the torture), with even greater pain, and had me brought to him, and he spoke his mind (abusively) and went away. On the next Saturday in the evening he caused a bar to be placed on the floor in a hollow, and my feet were put under it and hammered upon with a wooden pin, so that I almost died of the pain. On the last day of December, which was Saint Sylvester's day, there came to me the aforesaid Messer Gaspare, and with him came Lunardo di Lunardi, the inquisitor of Milan, at the hour of matins, and had me taken up. Let every one guess how my heart felt. I commended myself to God and went before them. Being before them Lunardo asked me if I knew him, and I said: No. And he answered me: Also I will not leave thee till I have so wrought that thou shalt know me; and saying: Thou hast refused to tell the truth to Messer Gaspare; the prince has sent me to know the truth of thee; thou hadst best tell it and get his good grace; but though thou wouldest not tell it, be quite sure that thou shalt nevertheless tell it, or thine arms shall be left hanging to the cord (torn from the body). And with other words, which I write not, for hearing this every one may fancy how my heart felt. I answered that I had told the truth to Messer Gaspare, and that he (Lunardo) ought to be sure of this, because if it had been my own son who had accused the Count Carmagnola I would say so rather than desire more torture, and all the more he should consider that I would do so if it were a stranger; and I said the like as to what concerned the other chief points (of the inquiry). Then Lunardo said to me: Thou wilt not name the real traitor; he had me undressed and fastened to the cord, etc.

On the second of January Corner was told that he was to be tortured again, and he addressed his tormentors as follows:—

Since this is your will, which will soon be done, I ask one thing of you as a grace, that since I am to lose this body so miserably, I may not lose my soul, and that I may confess and receive communion, in order that our Lord God may have mercy on this poor soul. Lunardo answered: I wish it may go to the house of the Devil. Hearing this cruel speech I answered that although fortune had given him power over the body, God had not given him power over the soul, and that I hoped, by His grace, that if I had good patience this should be my purgatory, for my innocence' sake; and that He would receive my soul into His glory, and (I said): The more pain you inflict on this wretched body so much the more merit will He give me, and to Him I commend myself.

The unhappy man was kept in prison six years, and was supposed in Venice to be dead, but he succeeded in sending a message to his son. The Republic then sternly demanded of Visconti his release, and he returned to his home at last, deformed by torture, pale and emaciated, with a beard that descended to his belt. He lived just two months after that, prematurely broken by his horrible sufferings, and was followed to his grave by a vast concourse of the people. Romanin says that he was a nephew of the Doge Marco Corner, whose brave defence of his poverty and of his burgher wife, when he was a candidate, will be remembered. It is more likely that the Doge was the Provveditor's great-uncle, as he died a very old man, more than seventy

years before the death of the unfortunate Giorgio. It is possible, however, that Romanin may have meant that the latter was the Doge's grandson, for in Italian there is but one word to signify 'grandson' or 'nephew,' though when the former meaning is intended it is usual to make it clear.

Portraits of Doge Francesco Foscari: one, attributed to G. Bellini, Museo Civico, Room XVI.: another, by Bartolommeo Bon, Camera degli Stucchi, ducal palace.

Foscari's name is so closely associated in most persons' memories with the tragedy of his worthless son, that we are apt to forget that his reign lasted a third of a century, and covered one of the most important periods in Venetian history. It embraces most of the wars of the league, the rise and fall of Carmagnola, the end of the house of Visconti, and the foundation and elevation of the Sforza family; and, most important of all, the taking of Constantinople by the Turks.

Much sentimental nonsense has been written about the two Foscari, and even such a historian as Daru has had the courage to tell us that the Doge presided in the court which condemned his son, and that Jacopo received his sentence from the mouth of his own father. Not content with stating these impossibilities, Daru has actually described the scene, with many details, though it could not, under any circumstances, have taken place, since a special edict of the Council of Ten expressly forbade the Doge, or any member of his family, to be present at the trial.

Jacopo's troubles began soon after his marriage in 1441 with Lucrezia, a daughter of Leonardo Contarini.

The wedding had been celebrated with great splendour, and the bride had been conducted home over a bridge especially built for the ceremony across the Grand Canal; there had been boat-races, a tournament in which the great Francesco Sforza himself took part, and there had been illuminations of the city and endless other festivities. The bridegroom is said to have been a very cultivated young man of great personal charm, a Greek scholar, a lover of poetry, and a collector of rare manuscripts, but of weak character, careless and extravagant. It really looks as if his fate had been the final consequence of some momentary lack of means wherewith to satisfy his luxurious tastes. Three years after his marriage he was accused before the Council of Ten of having received gifts from several important citizens in consideration of obtaining honorific or lucrative posts for them through his influence with his father. One of his servants and several other persons were examined under torture, and their evidence led to an order for his arrest. He had been informed of what was going on, however, and had already escaped.

Rom: iv. 266 sqq., and Molmenti, Dogaressa, 250 sqq.

The trial proceeded without him, and it was sufficiently proved that a box existed in the Doge's house containing valuables which he had received. The law forbidding any member of the Doge's family to receive any gifts whatsoever, under any circumstances, was most rigidly enforced in Venice, and Jacopo was justly sentenced to a temporary exile; he was known to be in Trieste, and a galley was ordered to proceed thither to convey

him to Modon in the Peloponnesus, whence he was to journey at his own expense to Napoli di Romania, near Corinth, within one month; and while there he was to present himself to the governor every day, to sleep in the city every night, to keep no more than three servants, and to be treated in all respects as a private



GRAND CANAL LOOKING TO CANARREGGIO

citizen. If he refused to go on board the galley a price was set on his capture; he was to be brought to Venice and beheaded between the columns. Several minor personages were at the same time sentenced to short terms of exile, and to the loss of any public offices they might be holding at the time.

The offence was patent, the trial was legal, and the

condemnation was just; but Jacopo cared for none of these things, and altogether declining the invitation of the Ten to go on board the galley sent for him, he continued to live in Trieste as if nothing had happened. The Ten, on their side, were by no means anxious to incur the odium of decapitating the Doge's son, as they had declared that they would do if he refused obedience, and they now begged the Doge himself to use his paternal influence with Jacopo, in order that they might not be driven to extremities; but as this measure also remained without any effect, the Council confirmed its sentence and confiscated Jacopo's property. At any moment he might have been arrested, brought to Venice, and beheaded; but instead of this, a committee was named to examine into the circumstances. It was ascertained that Jacopo was in bad health; it was voted that this fact should be accepted as a sufficient excuse for his disobedience; and, by way of smoothing matters over, it was decreed that he should be exiled only to Treviso and the Trevisan district, almost within sight of Venice. Jacopo thought fit to submit to this mild decree, which was not modified, although it was soon afterwards discovered that he had received two thousand and forty ducats, with a quantity of silver plate, from Francesco Sforza. A year later the Doge presented a petition to the Council of Ten begging that, in consideration of his own old age, and of the fact that Jacopo, his wife, his children, and all their servants, suffered from malarious fever in the climate of Mestre, Jacopo might be allowed to return

to Venice. This petition was actually granted, doubtless owing to the signal services rendered to the Republic by the old Doge during a reign which had already lasted twenty years.

Jacopo returned, and during the next three years nothing is known of his mode of life. It must be admitted that, so far, the Ten had acted with unusual clemency. They can hardly be blamed, however, for having watched Jacopo afterwards.

On the evening of the fifth of November 1450 an atrocious murder was committed, and the fact that the victim, the noble Ermolao Donato, had been one of the heads of the Ten during Jacopo's trial, and that he was killed just after he had left the ducal palace, cast suspicion upon the younger Foscari. It was not until two months later that a formal accusation was laid against him and he was arrested. There was certainly strong evidence to prove the crime. Foscari had long made no secret about his hatred of the murdered man; a servant of Jacopo's had been seen hanging about the palace as if waiting for some one just before Donato had come out; and a good many minor pieces of testimony were adduced.

There is not the slightest truth in the story that Jacopo Loredan ever held the Foscari family responsible for the death of his father, who was probably poisoned by Visconti, nor that he entered the crime as a debt in his ledger, and wrote 'paid' opposite the entry when the elder Foscari was deposed. Yet it is true that a sort of feud had long existed between the

two families, that Pietro Loredan had been the unsuccessful candidate when Foscari had been elected, and that Jacopo Loredan now took an active part in the proceedings against Jacopo Foscari.

The trial was not in any way a secret one. The evidence was only circumstantial, and even under torture Jacopo confessed nothing. In modern England or America he would not have been tortured, but he would in all probability have been hanged for the murder. The Ten must have felt the difficulty in which they were placed, and they met it by condemning him to exile in Crete, not allowing his wife and children to accompany him. Foscari was then taken from the ducal palace and placed on board a ship, which conveyed him to his destination. He remained in Crete unmolested during five years.

Here, again, dramatists and writers of fiction have invented an extraordinary tale. It is narrated that Jacopo, being unable to bear the loneliness

1456.

of exile, deliberately wrote a letter, in which he appealed for help, to Francesco Sforza, then Duke of Milan, intending that the missive should fall into the hands of the Ten, in order that the Council might have him brought back to Venice to be tried; and we are asked to believe that he risked the agonies of torture for the sake of once more seeing his own people. What actually happened seems to be that Jacopo had become intimate in his exile with certain Genoese, through whom he attempted to establish a correspondence with Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople, in

the hope that the Sultan would send a galley on which he might escape from Crete. If he had succeeded, the Turkish vessel would certainly not have brought him to Venetian waters.

Venice had suffered much in her commerce by the Mohammedan conquest; a number of her citizens had fought in the last defence of Constantinople, and some had been afterwards murdered in cold blood by the Sultan's orders. An agreement had subsequently been reached, it is true, but the Ten could hardly be expected to look with leniency on a secret correspondence between the son of her Doge and the despot of the Osmanlis.

Jacopo Foscari was brought back to Venice and tried again. He now confessed everything immediately, without compulsion. The story of his having been horribly tortured during this second trial appears to be a pure invention, for in the records of the Council of Ten the fact that the cord was used is invariably stated on each occasion, and in this case there is no mention of any such matter. I refer the incredulous reader to Romanin's fourth volume, in which abundant proof of this will be found, with the most minute reference to existing documents. Smedley wrote at a time when those papers had not been found, and confessed, moreover, to having largely used Daru.

Jacopo was condemned to return to Crete and to be confined there in prison during one year; he was told, however, that if he again wrote letters to foreign princes he should end his life under lock and key.

He was allowed to see his family and his father once more, before his departure, and the aged Doge took leave of his only son with tears and deep emotion; but to Jacopo's entreaties that the Doge would endeavour to procure his return, the old man could only answer, 'Go, Jacopo, obey and ask no more.'

None the less, after his final departure the Doge made every effort to obtain his pardon, and was seconded by several of the great patricians; but Jacopo died in January 1457, long before his year of imprisonment was out.

The blow completely broke down the Doge, who was now about eighty-four years of age; he became unable to attend to any affairs of state, and the Council of Ten, not unwillingly perhaps, but with a full understanding of the importance of such a step, determined to depose him and elect another Doge. At its best the Council of Ten was a fairly just court; at its worst it was the most unscrupulous, sordid, despotic, and yet cowardly body of men that ever called themselves a tribunal, until the French revolutionaries beat all records of infamy in the name of the 'rights of man'; but at no time did the Council ever show the smallest inclination to be sentimental; and it was very rarely generous, for generosity is probably one of the noble forms of sentiment. Francesco Foscari had reigned too long, and was now useless, even as the figure-head which the chief of a thoroughly constitutional and non-imperial state should be. The Council of Ten deposed him, and the Great

Council elected another Doge in his place, Pasquale Malipieri.

The proposition presented by the heads of the Ten is extant, and is a masterpiece of sanctimonious cant, in which the Venetian State is spoken of as having originated in the infinite clemency of the divine Creator, and immense stress is laid on the administrative importance of the Doge's office. The fact was that the oligarchy hated Foscari, and felt that the conduct of his son had brought great scandal on the Republic. A committee of the Council waited on him twice, and requested him to resign on the score of old age, but he refused to do so; the third time the request became an order, and he was told to leave the ducal palace within eight days. The ducal ring was taken from his finger and hammered to pieces, as was done when a doge died.

He did not wait longer than necessary, and on the following day he left the palace, walking with a stick, but otherwise unaided. His brother Marco went with him, and proposed that they should go to their boat by the private and covered entrance, but the old man refused. 'I will go down,' he said, 'by that staircase up which I came to be Doge.'

The last legend concerning him is that he died of a broken heart on hearing the great bell announce the election of his successor. He died three days later, on All Saints' Day, and the new Doge was at mass when the news was brought to the church. Doubtless Foscari's end was hastened by the painful emotions of the last few days, however, and there was a strong

feeling in Venice against the Council of Ten for some time afterwards.

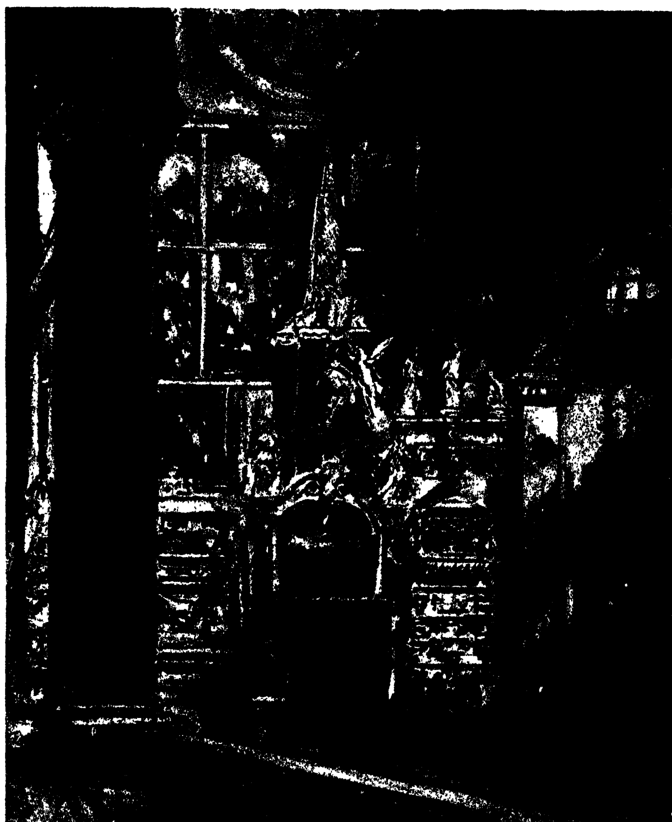
As usual, there was also an attempt to make amends by giving the dead man a magnificent funeral. This his widow proudly refused, saying that she was rich enough to give her husband a king's funeral without aid from the State; nevertheless, his body was taken by order of the Signory and was laid out in state, arrayed in the ducal garments with all the insignia; and Malipieri, the new Doge, followed the bier to the Frari dressed as a simple senator, as if Foscari's successor had not yet been elected.

Returning for a moment to the list of the condottieri who served Venice in the fifteenth century, it is time to say that Carmagnola was succeeded as general of the Venetian armies by the Duke of Mantua, who before long went over to the enemy with his men, his weapons, and his baggage. The next commander was one of his lieutenants, a certain Erasmo da Narni, famous under the nickname of 'Gattamelata,' or Honey-Cat.

Eroli, Erasmo Gattamelata.

Erasmo Gattamelata of Narni was the son of a baker in that town, and is said to have got his nickname from his soft and cat-like ways, 'and for his speech, which was cautious and also sweet and suave as honey.' As there are still families of the name in northern Italy who were never connected with his, I cannot see why we need assume that in his case it was a nickname at all. Such appellations are common in Italy, and it is probably only because

he was such a distinguished condottiero that his has attracted so much attention. He began his fighting



TOMBS IN THE FRARI

career when he was young, and Braccio made him commander of his cavalry. He served many employers, amongst others Martin V., the Colonna Pope, and he

found himself opposed in the field 'both to Casa Braccio and Piccinino, and also to Stella, his old friends and leaders.' He was sixty years of age when he entered the service of the Venetian Republic. He had a sworn brother in arms, like many fighters of that day, a certain Count Brandolini, who was included in the agreement with Venice, which is given in full in the Marchese Eroli's book. It begins :—

1434.

Gattamelata and Count Brandolini are engaged as leaders of four hundred lances with three horses to each lance, as is customary, and also of four hundred footmen. And after six months they shall have, besides what is above agreed, fifty lances more for their two sons under them.

For the use of these four hundred lances there shall be given them 60 ducats for each lance. . . . Over and above this they shall have a loan (an advance) on their personal security, of 2000 ducats, and further, they shall soon have, on account of what the Sovereign Pontiff owes them for their service, 10,000 ducats.

But Gattamelata and Count Brandolini shall produce for the aforesaid money, and for the performance of their promise, suitable sureties, having received which the Doge and the Government will provide the money. . . .

As regards the booty which the said Gattamelata and Brandolini and their band may collect in time of war, the custom of the tenth shall be observed.

It was customary for condottieri to pay a tribute called Saint Mark's Fee, Onoranza di San Marco, to the Republic, which was a sort of income-tax on loot. War was a matter of business.

Lack of space prevents me from giving the agreement in full. It is very curious. Among other provisions is one forbidding the condottiero to present, for the roll call, the same charger or man 'more than once or under more than one lance,' a clause which gives an idea of the usual methods of cheating. All unimportant prisoners were their property as part of the booty; the important objects and persons, 'cities, lands, fortresses and their munitions, ruling princes and their brothers or sons, and rebels and traitors,' were to be handed over to Venice; but other condottieri and military commanders, if taken, were to be paid for by the Venetian Government, if it chose to pay half their ransoms.

At the end of the campaign Gattamelata and his friend received in 'noble and gentle fee' the castle and lands of Valmarino, on condition that the population should continue to buy its salt from the Venetian Republic, and that the two feudal holders should pay the Republic a yearly tribute of ten pounds of wax at the feast of Saint Mark. Gattamelata bought out his friend's share, and was inscribed in the Golden Book.

He and Sforza fought together against Piccinino, and amongst other things took back Verona.

1439. Verona retaken by the Venetians, Giovanni Contarini; Sala delle Quattro Porte, ducal palace.

Gattamelata died of apoplexy not long after the end of that campaign, and was magnificently buried in the presence of the Doge and the Signory. A picture representing his obsequies was painted by Mantegna, but his biographer, Marchese Eroli, writing

in 1876, had not learned where it was, if it still existed, nor can I obtain any information on the subject.

The great Francesco Sforza was also during some time in the service of the Republic, but left it to marry Bianca Visconti with the prospect of succeeding to the Duchy, and he fought against Venice as bravely as he had lately fought under her standard. War was purely a matter of business with the condottieri, and so long as they fulfilled the conditions of each successive contract they undertook, no one ever blamed them for changing sides as often as was profitable. It was not even proper or customary to poison them for it, and in an age when political murder was as common as mere political calumny is now, the acts of Filippo-Maria Visconti were really looked on with disapproval by his fellow-scoundrels in power. It was considered that he went too far.

Astonishing things were done by the soldiers of that age. In the war with Milan, for instance, Venice at one time judged it necessary to get a small fleet into the Lake of Garda; and as the approaches by water were guarded by the Milanese, it was actually found possible to haul six galleys and twenty-five long-boats by means of oxen and capstans from the river Adige up the steep slope of the Monte Baldo and down to Torbole, where the vessels were launched into the lake—and promptly blockaded by the enemy.

Rom. iv. 196.

Battle of Lake Garda, Tintoretto; ceiling, Hall of Great Council.

In the same war Brescia successfully withstood a siege of no less than three years. It would take long

to give even a slight idea of the feats of arms performed on both sides by hired troops, at a time when all Italy was on fire, and war was more or less continuous because the condottieri, who lived by it, were obliged to make it so or starve. The country was in a bad state; if the strong anywhere protected the weak, it was in order to enslave them more effectually, and the weak often revolted against the enforced protection they received.

Visconti died in 1447, leaving four wills, on the third of which Sforza founded those pretensions to the dukedom which he soon succeeded in establishing, though the Milanese declared that they would be a republic like Venice and Genoa. We smile at the futility of such a simple popular aspiration, in an age when soldiers were rulers and rulers were tyrants. The Milanese were obliged to employ Sforza to fight for them; he did so, routed the Venetians, forced them to a peace, and then entered into an alliance with them which gave them all the Cremasco, with Bergamo and Brescia, but landed him safely on the throne of Milan.

He had in him the stuff of a good prince, and he is said to have indulged dreams of uniting all Italy in a sort of federation to defend the country from foreign invasion.

But greater events were happening in the East, where the Byzantine Empire was at the last gasp of its existence. Even if Venice had thrown all her strength into opposing the Turks and protecting her Eastern commerce, instead of quarrelling with Milan, she

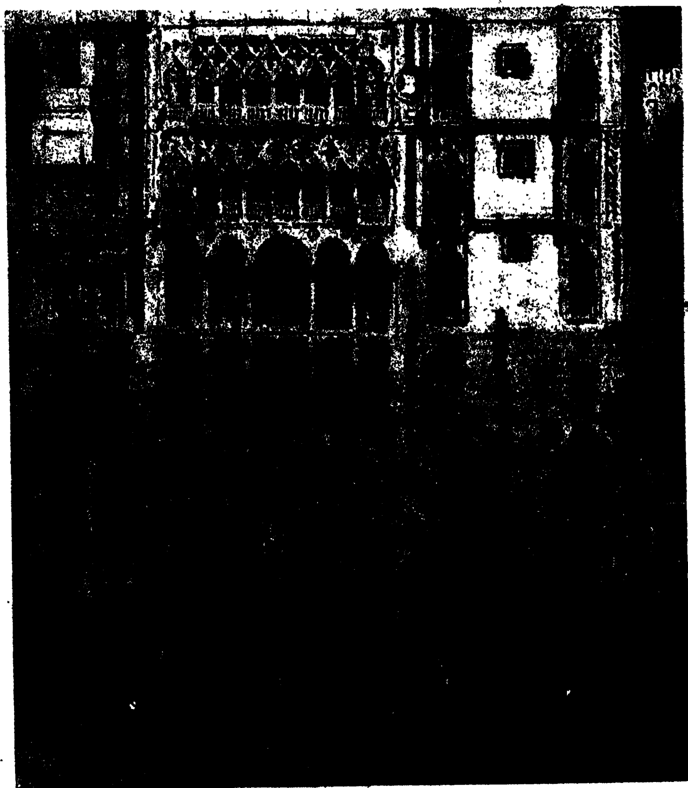
could not have retarded the fall of Constantinople by any long time. As it was, she sent but little help to the last of the emperors. The Byzantines had never been good fighters, and the tremendous fortifications of the city alone checked Mohammed's army of one hundred and sixty thousand fanatics.

Smyrna taken by the Venetians, Paolo Veronese; Hall of the Great Council.

Constantinople was taken in 1453, and in the wild massacre of Christians that followed, many Venetians were butchered. The Republic is said to have lost property worth three hundred thousand ducats. Fifteen Venetian ships succeeded in escaping, with eight Genoese vessels. But the mere loss of money and valuables was nothing compared with that which must have followed if the commerce of Venice in the East had been altogether destroyed. There was much to overlook and forgive, it is true, if an agreement were to be reached with Mohammed the Conqueror. He had impaled a Venetian captain and beheaded thirty of his crew before the siege; he had decapitated the Venetian Bailo and his son in cold blood afterwards, a great number of Venetians had perished in the massacre, and twenty-nine nobles had been held for ransom; and in return for these injuries and insults the Republic had not struck a blow. The exigencies of commerce were great.

Venice played a double part in what followed, making a show of rousing the Pope to preach a crusade on the one hand, and, on the other, quietly drawing up a treaty with the Sultan, by which the

Republic was to pay tribute for her Eastern settlements, the slave-trade was to be allowed to continue in the



CA D' ORO

Black Sea, provided that only Christians, and not Mussulmans, were bought and sold, and the Sultan was to force the Genoese of Pera to pay what they

owed the Venetians. The latter clause was, no doubt, a good stroke of business, and the treaty contained many others which proved that its end was sordidly commercial.

Two hundred and fifty years had passed since blind Enrico Dandolo had led the Venetians to the conquest of Constantinople. What they did then cannot be justified, it is true, but no man who has fighting blood in his veins can help admiring the magnificent courage that performed such a feat of arms. In the same way, I suppose that no one in whom the true commercial spirit is alive will withhold his admiration from a people who could forgive insult and forget injury so completely as those later Venetians did in 1454, for the sake of making money. It avails not to reflect that it was probably too late to stem the westward movement of the Turks; the man of heart will always feel that the richest nation in Europe might have done something to save Constantinople from her fate.

Pope Nicholas V. thought so, and expressed his disgust to the Senate through his legate, but the Venetian Government answered him in one of those sanctimonious speeches which it knew so well how to frame on occasion, and advised the Pope to turn his attention towards pacifying and uniting all Christian princes in a general league against the common enemy, well knowing that no such attempt could succeed.

In spite of the treaty, however, the Venetians never did well in the East after that, and their old enemies the Genoese got the better of them in the

trade of the Black Sea, for the Turks were by no means satisfied yet with what they had taken, and Venice was more or less engaged during the next twenty years in trying to protect her Mediterranean colonies.

She had suffered considerably in her fortunes, though her credit appeared inexhaustible. Romanin has unearthed some curious figures. He estimates the loss of property by the fall of Constantinople at three hundred thousand ducats, and says that there were a number of bad commercial failures in Venice in consequence, notably that of Andrea Priuli, for twenty-four thousand ducats. The aggregate estimated value of the houses in Venice diminished between 1425 and 1445 by thirteen thousand ducats, which does not seem very disastrous where the whole reached three hundred and sixty thousand; but the war with Milan alone cost seven million ducats in ten years, in 1428 the Venetian Chamber of Commerce owed nine millions, and Romanin adds that in 1440 the bonds of the public debt were only worth eighteen and a half per cent of their nominal value, a statement in which there seems to be some mistake, unless that extreme depression was merely momentary. There can be no doubt but that the acquisition of extensive territory by warfare, and the reckless extravagance which became only too common in Foscari's brilliant reign, had led to a serious diminution of wealth and population, and had burdened the Republic with a debt from which she was never to free herself again.

An attempt was made by Pope Pius II. to send a crusade against the Turks, and as such an expedition, if it had resulted in the expulsion of the Turks, would have been much to the advantage of Venice, she lent her support readily. The Pope, however, died suddenly when he was about to bless the united fleet on its departure from Ancona, and the result was that the whole alliance broke up at once, and those who had composed it departed for their homes without delay.

In Italy itself there was constant war, useless to those who paid for it, and profitable only to the soldiers they employed. The command of the Venetian troops had now passed to the great condottiero Bartolommeo Colleoni, a man quite as brave and devoted to the Republic as Gattamelata had been, and for employing whom the other Italian states envied her. When his contract with Venice had been executed, the Florentines succeeded in engaging him; but the incredible rivalry amongst the divers Italian states to obtain his services at last led to a treaty by which it was agreed that he should be sent against the Turks at the joint expense of them all. Of course this was not carried out, and perhaps no one ever expected that it could be. Moreover, Colleoni did not live long, and dying at a comparatively early age, he left all his fortune to the Republic on condition that it should be used for a campaign against the Turks, and that a statue should be set up to himself in the Square of Saint Mark's.

With amazing dishonesty and admirable indifference to his wishes, Venice used his money for a war against the Duke of Ferrara; and the monument, which must indeed be admitted to be one of the finest equestrian statues in existence, was placed in the little square of San Giovanni e Paolo.

Statue of Bartolommeo Colleoni, attributed to Verrocchio, Piazza SS. Giovanni e Paolo.

In spite of the treaty with the Sultan, Venice was obliged to spend no less than twelve hundred thousand ducats in defending her possessions against the Turks during five years; and the Mussulmans crossed Dalmatia and appeared in Friuli, to the general consternation of Europe. It is said that at this time the only ally upon which Venice could count was the King of Persia, whose interest it was to check the progress of Turanian invasion. Every one knows that although the Persians are Mohammedans, they belong to a sect which entertains a profound aversion for that of the Turks.

One of the principal episodes in this somewhat desultory warfare was the siege of Scutari in Albania, to possess which the Conqueror was willing to sacrifice any number of men. The place itself was very strong, but contained only about two thousand and five hundred persons, between mercenaries, citizens, and women. The Sultan brought eighty thousand men against them, whom he divided into four watches, each of twenty thousand, and each under orders to fight during six hours out of the twenty-four. The assault upon the breach, which was soon made, was therefore

continuous; yet the heroic Antonio da Lezze, by dividing his little force in a similar manner, succeeded in resisting the enemy during thirty-six hours, and the slaughter was so terrific that Mohammed determined to give up the attempt and to starve the town till it surrendered. He had lost over twenty-five thousand men.

Smedley, quoting Sabellico, says that the continued storm of arrows discharged by the assailants during two days and a night was something almost indescribable; a wretched cat that tried to steal across an exposed roof was shot through by eleven arrows at once; in many places three and four arrows had struck in precisely the same spot, splitting one another in succession, and during several months after the Turks had withdrawn, the shafts they had shot supplied kitchens, baths, and ovens with firewood.

Smedley, II. chap. xiii.

1478.

The heroic little city held out against famine and artillery during eleven months, and when at last Venice had made peace with the Sultan on condition that the garrison should be allowed to leave the town with its arms and baggage, Antonio da Lezze marched out with four hundred and fifty men and one hundred and fifty women, all that was left of the little force which had successfully resisted the greatest conqueror of the age during the greater part of a year.

Rom. iv. 382.

It is almost needless to say that the Republic treated the hero with her usual vile ingratitude, and that Da

Lezze was imprisoned for a year and banished for ten because certain of the surviving inhabitants of Scutari accused him of having written to Venice that the town



ENTRANCE TO S. ZACCHARIA

was short of provisions when there was still a considerable store.

The impulse of conquest which had led the Turks so far was now almost exhausted, and when Mohammed the Conqueror died, the moment would have been

favourable for driving the Turks out of the Archipelago, especially as the throne of the Osmanlis was disputed by a number of claimants. But Venice was exhausted by her many struggles, and the sovereigns of other European states were only too ready to sacrifice the interests of Christianity at large to their private ends. The result was that the Republic, finding herself alone, made another ignominious peace with the Turks. But even now she had no rest, for she was at war with the Duke of Ferrara, who enjoyed the protection of the Pope. The latter exhausted every diplomatic means to induce Venice to withdraw; but the only result was that the Republic recalled its ambassador from Rome. Sixtus IV. now excommunicated Venice, and attempted to send notice of the excommunication by the political agent whom the Venetian ambassador had left in Rome. That official, however, declined to take the message, and the Pope sent a special envoy, who was to present himself at the palace of the Patriarch. But the prelate succeeded in avoiding him by feigning illness, so that official notice of the interdict never reached the Signory, a result which delighted the Venetians and proportionally scandalised all other Catholics. Venice gave formal notice to the Emperor, the King of France, the King of England, the Duke of Burgundy, and the

1483. Defence of Brescia, Tintoretto; Hall of Great Council.

1484. Taking of Gallipoli, Tintoretto; ceiling, Hall of Great Council.

1484. Victory of Vittor Soranzo over the men of Este, Tintoretto; Hall of Great Council.

1484. Defeat of the Duke of Ferrara, Francesco Bassano; ceiling, Hall of Great Council.

Duke of Austria, that she appealed against the excommunication to a future council, and meanwhile no further attention was paid to the interdict. It was, in fact, removed by the next Pope, Innocent VIII., who had no especial reason for maintaining it.

The Republic had to deal at this time with internal troubles as well as external difficulties. It happened that two men of the same name and family were successively elected to be doges, and that the house in question was one of those known as 'the new.' For the aristocracy divided itself into two classes, of which 'the old' included only the families of tribunitian descent, who considered themselves vastly superior to all the rest. Nevertheless, the younger houses succeeded in keeping the ducal honour to themselves for more than two hundred years. In 1450 sixteen of these families had solemnly sworn never to allow the election of any doge from amongst the elder houses, and sixty-eight years had already passed since one of the latter had been chosen. On the death of Marco Barbarigo it was noised abroad that the old houses were about to make a determined effort to recover the desired dignity. Agostino Barbarigo was elected with some difficulty, and it was quite clear that there were now two hostile factions in the Venetian Government which were more occupied with their party spites than with what concerned the welfare of the Republic.

It was a period of contradictions in Venetian history, for while the State seemed to be often gaining territory, it was frequently losing influence and undermining the

sources of its own wealth; and, on the whole, the loss during the fifteenth century considerably exceeded the profit.

It was at this time that Venice accomplished that remarkable piece of juggling which ended in the annexation of Cyprus.

Caterina Corner, or Catharine Cornaro, as we are accustomed to call her, was the niece of a Venetian noble who lived in Cyprus, and she had married Jacques de Lusignan, an illegitimate son of the last king of the island. Less than two years after her marriage, when she was about to become a mother, her husband suddenly died, bequeathing his kingdom to the child that should be born. The infant that came into the world was a son indeed, but only lived a few months, and as Catharine's husband had grasped the throne by driving out his half-sister, who was legitimate, his widow now had great difficulty in maintaining her position against the rightful heir, whose name was Charlotte, and who was married to the powerful Duke of Savoy. Catharine had no choice but to place herself under the protection of Venice, and the Republic, as usual when it undertook to help a friend in distress, began by hoisting its own flag on the citadel. With great skill the queen was gradually forced, in the course of fifteen years, into the position of resigning her little kingdom altogether into the hands of the Republic. In exchange

b. 1454, d. 1510. Smedley, II. chap. xiv.

1489.

Finding of the relic of the Cross in the Grand Canal, said to contain the portrait of Caterina Corner, crowned, by Gentile Bellini; Accademia, Room XV.

she was to receive a considerable income and an estate at Asolo, where she could keep up the forms of a small court, still retaining her royal title. She was brought to Venice, and was received with the utmost pomp and display, and she retired quietly to Asolo, to spend the rest of her life in the society of the most distinguished philosophers and men of letters of the century.

Venice laid hands on all possible aspirants to the throne of Cyprus, men and boys, women and girls ; the latter were consigned to convents, from which they were only allowed to go out occasionally with an escort. The young men were closely watched and their expenses defrayed by the Republic, and the boys were educated to be good Venetians.

So Venice got Cyprus, and for the sake of that little possession the Republic appears to have sacrificed the opportunity of helping Columbus to discover America. The fact has been denied, discussed, and asserted again by historians, but a document has been discovered by M. Urbain de Gheltof which, if genuine, puts an end to all doubt. That scholar has found in a private archive in Venice the copy of a letter to a Venetian noble written by Christopher Columbus from Palos, just before sailing to discover America. I translate the short document, in which the simple character of the Genoese explorer finds full expression :—

Very magnificent Sir—As your Republic did not think it was to its interest to accept my offers, and as all the hatred of enemies conspired to thwart me everywhere, I threw myself

into the arms of the Lord my God. And He, by the intercession of His saints, brought it about that the most clement King of Castile, in his generosity, should help me to carry out my plan of conquering a new world.

Urbain de Gheltof, Letter of Christ. Col.

Thus, praise be to the Lord my God, I obtained command of vessels and men, and I am presently going to sail towards this yet unknown land which God inspires me to seek. I thank you for all your kindness to me, and beg you to pray for me.
COLUMBO CRIST.

Written from PALOS, *August* 1, 1492.

The Venetians may not have very deeply regretted their refusal to help the Genoese navigator, but they were made to suffer acutely by the Portuguese discovery of the route to India by the Cape of Good Hope. For Portugal now imported by sea direct to Lisbon the rich merchandise of the East, of which the Venetians had hitherto enjoyed a monopoly, but for the passage of which they paid heavy duties to the Sultan. The supremacy of Venetian navigation was over, and a more daring race of seamen ventured voyages in distant and unknown oceans whither they were not followed by the old-fashioned mariners of the Mediterranean. It was in vain that the Republic proposed to the Sultan Bajazet a commercial alliance by which both powers might have profited; the Turk could not understand that the ruin of Venetian trade must impoverish the whole Archipelago and Constantinople itself. Instead of an alliance, a renewal of hostilities ensued, in the course of which Lepanto fell into the hands of the Turks, either because the

garrison was insufficient, or because the Venetian admiral,



THE PIAZZETTA, MISTY MORNING

Grimani, was not equal to the service required of him.

He shared the fate of almost all native-born Venetian commanders, and was brought home laden with chains so heavy that he could not have walked across the Piazzetta from the landing-place to his prison if he had not been held up by his son, who was a cardinal. He was confined in one of the worst cells, surnamed 'Forte,' the Strong, and his sufferings were such, according to Sanudo, who kept his journal at the time, that the cardinal appeared before the Signory one day to beg, as a favour, that his father might be executed rather than made to die by inches in his dungeon.

Marin Sanudo, III. chap. iii. 105.

The people, as often happened, were quite of the opinion of their masters, that to be beaten in fight was a shameful crime, and a savage song about the unlucky Grimani was bawled in the streets—

> Antonio Grimani, ruin of Christians, rebel of Venice!
> May you be eaten by dogs,
> By dogs and their pups,
> You and your sons,
> Antonio Grimani, ruin of Christians!

But it was of small use to torment the poor man and to make songs upon him. Venice was forced to make a commercial treaty with the Portuguese to save herself from ruin.

Then came Charles VIII. of France and descended into Italy with fire and the sword, and Venice was drawn into new and disastrous Italian wars. So ended the fifteenth century.

THE DOGES OF VENICE

(ACCORDING TO ROMANIN)

NOTE.—*The Venetian year began on March first, whence the frequent discrepancies between the dates given by different writers. In this work every effort has been made to bring all dates under the usual reckoning.*

I.	Paolo Lucio Anafesto	elected	697 d. 717	Seat in Heraclea.
II.	Marcello Tegaliano	„	717 „ 726	
III.	Orso Ipato	„	726 „ 737	(murdered). Seat in Malamocco.
	(From 737 to 742, military governors called 'Magistri Militum').			
IV.	Teodato Orso	elected	742 — 755	(blinded and deposed).
V.	Galla Gaulo	„	755 — 756	(blinded and exiled).
VI.	Domenico Monegario	„	756 — 764	(blinded and deposed).
VII.	Maurizio Galbaio	„	764 d. 787	
VIII.	Giovanni Galbaio and his son Maurizio	„	787 — 804	(both deposed).
IX.	Obelerio with his sons Beato and Costantino	„	804 d. 811	(the father put to death as a traitor).
X.	Agnello Partecipazio	„	811 „ 827	Seat henceforth in Rialto.
XI.	Giustiniano Partecipazio	„	827 „ 829	
XII.	Giovanni Partecipazio I.	„	829 — 836	(deposed).
XIII.	Pietro Tradonico	„	836 d. 864	(murdered).
XIV.	Orso Partecipazio I.	„	864 „ 881	
XV.	Giovanni Partecipazio II.	„	881 — 888	(abdicated).
XVI.	Pietro Candiano I.	„	888 d. 888	(killed in battle with pirates).
XVII.	Pietro Tribuno	„	888 „ 912	
XVIII.	Orso Partecipazio II. (Badoer)	„	912 — 932	(abdicated and died a monk).

XIX.	Pietro Candiano II. . .	elected	93[illegible]	
XX.	Pietro Partecipazio (Badoer)	„	939[illegible]	
XXI.	Pietro Candiano III. . .	„	942[illegible]	
XXII.	Pietro Candiano IV. . .	„	95[illegible]	
XXIII.	Pietro Orseolo I. . . .	„	[illegible]	[illegible] died [illegible] the [illegible]ation of a [illegible]
XXIV.	Vital Candiano	„	978 — 9[illegible]	[illegible] and be-[illegible]
XXV.	Tribuno Memmo . . .	„	9[illegible]. 991	
XXVI.	Pietro Orseolo II. . . .	„	991 „ 1008	
XXVII.	Ottone Orseolo . . .	„	1008 [illegible]	(exiled to Con[illegible]tinople)
XXVIII.	Pietro Centranigo . . .	„	[illegible] — 10[illegible]	(driven out).
XXIX.	Domenico Flabianico . .	„	[illegible] d. 1[illegible]	
XXX.	Domenico Contarini .	„	1[illegible] „ 1071	
XXXI.	Domenico Selvo . . .	„	1071 „ 1085	
XXXII.	Vital Falier	„	1085 „ 1096	
XXXIII.	Vital Michiel I. . . .	„	109[illegible] 1102	
XXXIV.	Ordelafo Falier	„	1102 „ 1118	(died in the Hungarian war).
XXXV.	Domenico Michiel . . .	„	1118 „ 1130	
XXXVI.	Pietro Polani	„	1130 „ 1148	
XXXVII.	Domenico Morosini .	„	1148 „ 1156	
XXXVIII.	Vital Michiel II. . . .	„	1156 „ 1172	(killed).
XXXIX.	Sebastian Ziani	„	1172 „ 11[illegible]	
XL.	Orio Mastro[illegible]iero . . .	„	1178 — [illegible]92	(abdicated and became a monk).
XLI.	Enrico Dandolo	„	1192 d. 1205	(died in Cons[illegible]nople).
XLII.	Pietro Ziani	„	1205 — 1229	(abdicate[illegible]
XLIII.	Jacopo Tiepolo	„	1229 — 1249	(abdicat[illegible]
XLIV.	Marin Morosini . . .	„	1249 d. 1253	
XLV.	Renier Zeno	„	1253 „ 1268	
XLVI.	Lorenzo Tiepolo . . .	„	1268 „ 1275	
XLVII.	Jacopo Contarini . . .	„	1275 — 1280	(abdicated).
XLVIII.	Giovanni Dandolo . . .	„	1280 d. 1289	
XLIX.	Pietro Gradenigo . . .	„	1289 „ 1311	
L.	Marin Zorzi	„	1311 „ 1312	
LI.	Giovanni Soranzo . . .	„	1312 „ 1329	
LII.	Francesco Dandolo . . .		1329 „ 1339	
LIII.	Bartolommeo Gradenigo .	„	1339 „ 1343	

LIV.	[illegible]andolo	elected	1343	d.	1354	
LV.	[illegible]lier	„	1354	„	1355	(beheaded April 17).
LVI.	G[illegible]anni Grad[illegible]	„	1355	„	1356	
LVI[illegible]	G[illegible]vanni [illegible]olf[illegible]	„	1356	„	1361	
LV[illegible]	[illegible]orenzo [illegible]	„	1361	„	1365	
LIX.	Marco Co[illegible]	„	1365	„	1368	
LX.	Andrea Contarini	„	1368	„	1383	
LXI.	Michel Morosini	„	1383	„	1384	
LXII.	Antonio Venier	„	1384	„	1400	
L[illegible]	Michel Steno	„	1400	„	1413	
L[illegible]	Tommaso Mocenigo	„	1413	„	1423	
LXV.	Francesco Foscari		1423	—	1457	(deposed, and died a few days later).
LXVI.	Pasqu[illegible]Malipiero	„	1457	d.	1462	
LXVII.	Cristo[illegible] Moro	„	1462	„	1471	
LXVIII.	Niccolò Tron	„	1471	„	1474	
LXIX.	Niccolò Marcello	„	1474	„	1474	
LXX.	Pietro Mocenigo	„	1474	„	[illegible]76	
LXXI.	Andrea Vendramin	„	1476	„	1478	
LXXII.	Giovanni Mocenigo	„	1478	„	1485	
LXXIII.	Marco Barbarigo	„	1485	„	1486	
LXXIV.	Agostino Barbarigo	„	1486	„	1501	
LXXV.	Leonardo Loredan	„	1501	„	1521	
LXXVI.	Antonio Grimani	„	1521	„	1523	
LXXVII.	Andrea Gritti	„	1523	„	1538	
LXXVIII.	Pietro Lando	„	1538	„	1545	
LXXIX.	Francesco Donato	„	1545	„	1553	
LXXX.	Marcantonio Trevisan	„	1553	„	1554	
LXXXI.	Francesco Venier	„	1554	„	1556	
LXXXII.	Lorenzo Priuli	„	1556	„	1559	
LXXXIII.	Girolamo Priuli	„	1559	„	1567	
LXXXIV.	Pietro Loredan	„	1567	„	1570	
LXXXV.	Aloise (Luigi) Mocenigo	„	1570	„	1577	
LXXXVI.	Sebastian Venier	„	1577	„	1578	
LXXXVII.	Niccolò Da Ponte	„	1578	„	1585	
LXXXVIII.	Pasquale Cicogna	„	1585	„	1595	
LXXXIX.	Marin Grimani	„	1595	„	1606	
XC.	Leonardo Donà	„	1606	„	1612	
XCI.	Marcantonio Memmo	„	1612	„	1615	
XCII.	Giovanni Bembo	„	1615	„	1618	
XCIII.	Niccolò Donà	„	1618	„	1618	
XCIV.	Antonio Priuli	„	1618	„	1623	
XCV.	Francesco Contarini	„	1623	„	1624	

XCVI.	Giovanni Corner . . .	elected	1624	d.	1[illegible]
XCVII.	Niccolò Contarini . . .	„	1630	„	163[illegible]
XCVIII.	Francesco Erizzo . . .	„	[illegible]	„	1646
XCIX.	Francesco Molin . . .	„	[illegible]	„	[illegible]55
C.	Carlo Contarini . . .	„	[illegible]	„	[illegible]56
CI.	Francesco Corner . . .	„	16[illegible]	„	[illegible]656
CII.	Bertuccio Valier . . .	„	1656	„	1658
CIII.	Giovanni Pesaro . . .	„	1658	„	1659
CIV.	Domenico Contarini . .	„	1659	„	1674
CV.	Niccolò Sagredo. . . .	„	1674	„	1676
CVI.	Aloise Contarini . . .	„	1676	„	1683
CVII.	Marcantonio Giustiniani .	„	1683	„	1688
CVIII.	Francesco Morosini . .	„	1688	„	1694
CIX.	Silvestro Valier . . .	„	1694	„	[illegible]
CX.	Aloise Mocenigo . . .	„	1700	„	1[illegible]
CXI.	Giovanni Corner . . .	„	1709	„	1722
CXII.	Aloise Sebastian Mocenigo	„	1722	„	1732
CXIII.	Carlo Ruzzini	„	1732	„	1735
CXIV.	Luigi Pisani	„	1735	„	1741
CXV.	Pietro Grimani	„	1741	„	1752
CXVI.	Francesco Loredan . . .	„	1752	„	1762
CXVII.	Marco Foscarini . . .	„	1762	„	1763
CXVIII.	Aloise Mocenigo . . .	„	1763	„	1779
CXIX.	Paolo Renier	„	1779	„	1788
CXX.	Ludovico Manin . . .	„	1788	—	1797 (abdicated with the aristocratic Government).

TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL DATES IN VENETIAN HISTORY

A.D.

421 (about) Venice founded by fugitives from Aquileia, Altinum, and Padua. (According to tradition on March 25, 421, at noon.)

697 . . Paulus Lucas Anafestus of Heraclea chosen as first doge.

809 . . Pepin, son of Charlemagne, attempts to take Venice and is defeated.

828 (about) The body of Saint Mark is brought to Venice, and he is proclaimed protector of the Republic in place of Saint Theodore.

959 (about) The brides of Venice and their dowries are carried off by Istrian pirates.

975 . . The first basilica of Saint Mark is destroyed by fire.

998 . . Pietro Orseolo is acclaimed as Doge of Venice and Dalmatia.

998 . . The Emperor Otho III. visits Venice secretly.

1009 . . Venice is ravaged by the plague.

1099 . . Venetians defeat the Pisans off Rhodes.

1123 . . Defeat of the Turks at Jaffa.

1123 . . The Doge Domenico Michiel takes Tyre.

1167 . . Venice joins the Lombard League, with Verona, Padua, Milan, Bologna, and other cities.

1172 . . Institution of the Great Council, in which membership is open and elective.

1177 . . The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa makes submission to Pope Alexander III. at Venice.

1177 . . The ceremony of the Espousal of the Sea by the Doge instituted.

1202 (Oct. 8) The Venetian fleet sets out for the Fourth Crusade under the Doge Enrico Dandolo.

1204 (April 12) Constantinople taken by the Venetian and French forces.

A.D.

1277 . . Membership in the Great Council limited to those of legitimate birth.

1297 . . Closure of the Great Council, in which membership becomes a privilege of the nobles.

1300 . . Conspiracy of Marino Bocconio.

1310 . . Conspiracy of Marco Quirini and Bajamonte Tiepolo.

1335 . . Permanent institution of the Council of Ten.

1348 . . Venice loses half her population by the plague.

1354 . . Conspiracy of Marino Faliero.

1379-80 . War of Chioggia.

1404-54 . During this time Venice possesses herself, on the mainland, of Padua, Ravenna, Verona, Treviso, Vicenza, Brescia, Bergamo, Feltre, Belluno, Crema, and Friuli.

1405 . . Carlo Zeno takes Padua from Carrara.

1426 . . League with Florence concluded. Brescia surrenders to the allied forces, the Venetian troops being commanded by Carmagnola.

1428 . . Bergamo surrenders to Carmagnola.

1432 (May 5) Carmagnola executed as a traitor to the Republic.

1437 . . Erasmo da Narni, nicknamed Gattamelata, is made commander of the Venetian army.

1449 . . Bartolommeo Colleoni is commander of the Venetian forces.

1453 (May 29) Constantinople taken by the Turks. Many Venetians are massacred and much Venetian property destroyed.

1477 . . Scutari, besieged by the Turks, is successfully defended by Antonio da Lezze.

1489 . . Venice annexes Cyprus, leaving Catharine Cornaro the empty title of its Queen.

1508 . . League of Cambrai, between the Emperor Maximilian, Pope Julius II., Louis XII. of France, and Ferdinand of Aragon.

1571 (Oct. 7) Battle of Lepanto won by the allied fleets of Venice, Genoa, the Holy See, and Spain, commanded respectively by Sebastiano Venier, Andrea Doria, and Marcantonio Colonna, under Don John of Austria as commander-in-chief.

1574 . . Visit of Henry III. of France.

1575-7 . . Venice, swept by the plague, loses one-fourth of her population, Titian among them. Church of the Redentore built to commemorate its cessation.

1577 (Dec. 20) Fire destroys the Hall of the Great Council, with many magnificent works of art.

1630 . . Another visitation of the plague, commemorated by the Church of the Salute.

1715-18 . The Turks wrest from Venice Crete and the Peloponnesus.

A.D.

1784 . . Angelo Emo, the last Venetian leader, humbles the Bey of Tunis.

1788 . . Election of the 120th and last Doge, Ludovico Manin.

1796 . . The ceremony of the espousal of the sea by the Doge takes place for the last time.

1797 (April 18) General Bonaparte, by the treaty of Campo-Formio, cedes to Austria the Venetian provinces between the Po, the Oglio, and the Adriatic, in exchange for Romagna, with Ferrara and Bologna.

1797 (May 12) The Doge Ludovico Manin abdicates, and the Great Council accepts the Provisional Government required by General Bonaparte.

1798 (Jan. 18) The Austrian garrison takes possession of Venice.

1866 (Oct. 19) Austria cedes Venice to Napoleon III., who transfers it to Victor Emanuel II., King of Italy.

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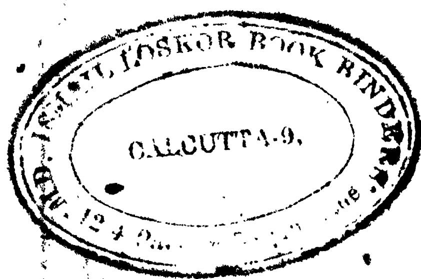
INDEX

END OF VOL. I



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